

***The Contribution of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini
(1850-1917) to Catholic Educational Practice in the
Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries***

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Ph D Thesis

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I, Maria Patricia Williams confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

My thesis evaluates the educational practice of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917). Cabrini, a schoolteacher from Lombardy, founded the Institute of Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) in Codogno, Italy in 1880. When she died, a United States citizen in Chicago, USA, she had established 70 houses in Europe and the Americas. One thousand women had joined the MSC. Her priority was to work with some of the estimated thirteen million Italians who emigrated between 1880 and 1915. The literature review considers the relatively little work in the history of education on Catholic educational practice. The research addresses three questions:

1. How did Mother Cabrini understand Catholic educational practice?
2. How can Mother Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice be seen in the work of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?
3. How far did Mother Cabrini develop a coherent approach to Catholic educational practice?

A multiple case study approach is used, focussing on the educational practice of Cabrini and the MSC in Rome, London and New Orleans, within the transnational context of their Institute. Practice in schools and orphanages, the community and in the education and formation of sisters and lay teachers is investigated. Sources studied include Cabrini's 2054 published letters and unpublished documents in the MSC archive, including the Rule, house annals, job descriptions for teachers, memories of individual sisters and pupils and records of celebrations. In analysing

data, reference is made to the work of Catholic philosophers and theologians to provide a 'lens of faith', for example, that of Servais Pinckaers OP. Cabrini's approach is shown to be a new application of ancient principles. In this way, she contributed a progressive lived tradition to Catholic educational practice.

Positionality Statement

My interest in researching Mother Cabrini's educational practice originated in the 1980s when considering Brian Simon's article on the lack of pedagogy historically in England.¹ He contrasted this with the strong tradition of pedagogy in continental Europe. As a history teacher and visiting tutor on the history PGCE programme at the Institute of Education I had been considering my experience as a pupil in an MSC primary school in London. In the light of my professional training and experience, the practice there appeared progressive. I recalled a child-centred approach. Teaching was adapted to the learning needs of individuals and a range of resources used. I was interested to see if this was rooted in the Italian origins of the MSC. My degree in European history and languages had prepared me to research the topic but the demands of my work in London comprehensive schools resulted in my commencing the project in retirement.

¹ Brian Simon, 'Why No Pedagogy in England?' in *Learners and Pedagogy*, eds., Jenny Leach and Bob Moon (London: Sage, 1999), 34-45.

Impact Statement

Benefits Inside and Outside of Academia

This research on Mother Cabrini's contribution to Catholic educational practice will have a beneficial impact both inside and outside academia. It provides an insight into a progressive child-centred strand of Catholic educational practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It also contributes to knowledge of international currents of educational ideas and practice in the same period. In developing aspects of Catholic theology and philosophy for use as analytical tools it offers new methodology for researching the history of education in a faith or multi-faith tradition. This is the first academic research on Cabrini's educational practice. It can provide contextual data and methodological ideas for scholars researching practice in areas still unexplored, such as the work of Cabrini and her sisters in Latin America and China. It contributes a useable past relating to educational issues of current interest outside of academia. It provides a historical perspective on international networks of schools and formal and informal education of migrants. It can build on the significant public interest in the work of Cabrini, following the celebration of the centenary of her death in December 2017. The current world-wide focus on migrants has introduced her to new audiences. It will also be of interest to those engaged in debates on faith education.

Disseminating Outputs

I will disseminate outputs from my research through scholarly societies, journals and participation in global educational projects bringing together scholars and practitioners. I have given 19 conference presentations on my research. I will continue to be an active member of societies including

the International Standing Conference for the History of Education, (ISCHE) the British Educational Research Association and the Network for Researchers in Catholic Education. I expect to make a particular contribution to the ISCHE Standing Working Group, 'Migrants, Migration and the History of Education'. I have had an article published in *History of Education*. I have been invited to submit articles to three other journals. I am also using the insights from my research in a chapter for a volume in a new history of education series.

I will continue to work on three global educational projects. The first is setting up the Cabrini Institute at Cabrini University, Radnor, Pennsylvania. This will develop their archive of documents, pictures and artefacts as a resource for scholars, practitioners and the general public. The second, the Cabrini Education Committee, is organised by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who continue Cabrini's work today. It oversees the work of Cabrini schools in Europe, the USA, Latin America and Africa. The third project is "'A Pedagogy of Peace" the Theory and Practice of Catholic Women Religious in Migrant Education', an international collaboration led by the University of Notre Dame, USA. I am one of four principal investigators. The project brings together scholars and Catholic sister practitioners educating migrants in locations including Lampedusa, Nigeria and the Philippines.

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Abbreviations

AG Archivio Generale dell' Istituto Suore Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù, Rome.

AL 'Annotazione sulla fondazione di questa casa di Londra, ricevute da quello che ricordano le sorelle'.

CR Cabriniana Room, Cabrini University, Radnor, Pennsylvania.

FR 'Fondazione della Casa di Roma' (Dalle Memorie di M. Serafina Tommasi).

LA London Archive, Convent of the Sacred Heart, Honor Oak, London.

M1 Memorie 1: 'Memorie della Casa di New Orleans 1892' .

M2 Memorie 2: 'Brevi Memorie, conversione e testimonianze'.

M3 Memorie 3: 'Missione di New Orleans Insediamento dell'opera'.

M4 Memorie 4: 'New Orleans – Anno 1892'.

MF 'Memorie della fondazione del collegio in Forest Hill, Woodville Hall, Honor Oak Road'.

MO 'Memorie Ortrantofio New Orleans 1904'.

ML 'Memorie Londra, sulla fondazione in Londra'.

MSC Missionarie del Sacro Cuore

OP Order of Preachers

RR 'Relazione della Casa di Roma'.

SDA Southwark Diocesan Archive, Archbishop's House, Southwark.

SJ Society of Jesus

SLHL Southwark Local History Library and Archive.

SND Sister of Notre Dame

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Translations

Translations from Italian and French originals are my own.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1 Who is Mother Cabrini?

This is a study of the educational practice of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), best known as 'Mother Cabrini'. A schoolteacher from Lombardy, Cabrini founded The Institute of Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) in Codogno, northern Italy. This study covers the 37 years from the founding in 1880 until Cabrini's death in 1917. During this time she established 70 foundations in nine nations: the United States, Panama, Nicaragua, Brazil, Argentina, England, France and Spain as well as Italy. A thousand women from across these nations had joined the MSC by 1917. Most of the educational provision was for Italian migrants. In 1909 Cabrini became a US citizen. In 1946 she became their first canonised saint. Her contribution to providing for migrants was recognised internationally when she was named Universal Patron of Emigrants by Pope Pius XII in 1950. Two years later she was declared 'Italian Immigrant of the Century' by the American Committee on Italian Immigration.¹

In spite of her major contribution to the field, this is the first study of Cabrini's educational practice. Unpublished theses look at her educational ideals and there is a short pamphlet on her educational philosophy.² There has been no published academic work on Cabrini's educational practice

¹ Mary Louise Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini "Italian Immigrant of the Century"* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1992), 1.

² Carita Elizalde OSF, 'Mother Cabrini's Educational Ideals', Master's thesis, University of Santo Tomas, Manila; F M La Mantia, 'The Educational Work of Mother Cabrini in the United States', MA Thesis, DePaul University, 1956; Maria Pia Aguadro, (Sister Giovanna, MSC), 'Madre Cabrini Maestra ed Educatrice', Tesi di laurea, Magistero Maria SS Assunta, Rome, 1970-71; Rose Basile Greene, *The Cabrinian Philosophy of Education* (Pennsylvania: Cabrini College, 1967).

apart from my 2015 article, based on chapter 7 of this thesis.³ This study considers her as an Italian missionary educator, mobilising her Catholic educational practice as a progressive alternative to modernity's secular provision. It is a study in history of education, considering the relationship between education and changing society. It is also, therefore, a social and religious history of an institution within a transnational context. Whilst it links a person to a movement it is not a biography.

2 Aims

2.1 To contribute to the history of education in the area of Catholic educational practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Richard Aldrich claimed that the role of the individual has often been minimized in general studies of educational reform, highlighting the need to revisit established interpretations and consider female educationalists.⁴ Research on the contribution of an Italian Catholic foundress and her teaching sisters lends itself to contributing to the broader history of Catholic educational practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Urbanisation and migration in the nineteenth century presented challenges to civil society and the Catholic Church which required new kinds of educational responses. Catholic women religious⁵ provided such responses, becoming major players in the field. The MSC was one of 185 female religious institutes founded in Italy in the

³ Maria Patricia Williams, 'Mobilising Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice: the Transnational Context of the London School of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus 1898–1911', *History of Education* 44:5, (2015): 631–650.

⁴ Richard Aldrich, 'The Role of the Individual in Educational Reform', *Paedagogica Historica*, 34: sup2, (1998): 345–357.

⁵ The term 'Catholic women religious' is a generic one covering both 'nuns' or women in enclosed orders and 'sisters' in congregations doing active work.

nineteenth century.⁶ Over 400 were founded in France⁷ and 31 in Ireland.⁸ The majority worked in education. Cabrini and the Institute she founded provide a good example.⁹ She and her sisters established a wide range of free and fee-paying provision from nursery through to higher education. Although the majority of pupils were female, they also taught boys. Pupils came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, from both migrant and indigenous families and although the majority were Catholic, some were not.

Cabrini's work is well suited to a study of practice. She was not a theoretician but a professionally qualified practitioner, who gathered together a body of professionally qualified teaching sisters in the MSC. In 1868 she gained her *Patente di Maestra*, the teacher's licence required by the Italian state for all teachers. With her newly-acquired status of primary school teacher Cabrini represented a prime example of the modern, professional woman in Liberal Italy. She taught for 12 years, prior to establishing the MSC. Initially this was in her sister Rosa's private school, then as the village schoolmistress in Vidardo between 1872 and 1874 and in the House of Providence Orphanage, Codogno, from 1874 until 1880. She did not write an educational treatise but rather wrote to mobilise her practice.

⁶ Lucetta Scaraffia, "'Christianity Has Liberated Her and Placed Her alongside Man in the Family': From 1850 to 1988 (Mulieris Dignitatem)", Keith Botsford, trans., in *Women and Faith: Religious Life in Italy from Late Antiquity to the present*, eds. Lucetta Scaraffia and Gabriella Zarri (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 259.

⁷ Claude Langlois, *Le Catholicisme au Féminin : Les Congrégations Françaises à Supérieure Générale au XIX^e Siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1984), 9.

⁸ Deidre Raftery, 'The "mission" of nuns in female education in Ireland, c.1850–1950', *Paedagogica Historica*, 48 No2 (2012):304.

⁹ Cabrini used the term 'institute' rather than 'congregation'.

A distinctive feature of the Institute which Cabrini founded in 1880 was its status as an independent female organisation. In this sense it can be seen as a progressive development in the history of Catholic women religious. She wrote the Rule guiding the life and work of her Missionary Sisters herself. As Maria Susanna Garroni has shown, in her work on the Pallottini sisters, this was not typical.¹⁰ At the time it was more usual for women's congregations to be established by a priest or bishop who wrote the Rule and continued to influence their development. Cabrini had proved herself to the local bishop and clergy by agreeing to their request to work as assistant and then superior of the House of Providence Orphanage, which was overseen by Antonia Tondini and her associate Teresa Calza. Bishop Gelmini had given them permission to establish a religious congregation but they proved to be 'poor administrators and role models'.¹¹ Cabrini arrived in September 1874 and reorganised the administrative and religious practices as well as setting up a programme of community education. The majority of the sisters were happy when on 14th September 1877 Cabrini made her final vows and was appointed superior by Gelmini.¹² Tondini and Calza, however, harassed Cabrini and tried to force her to resign. As a result, 'the sisters took turns at night guarding the superior's (Cabrini's) room to prevent insults or violence'.¹³ The bishop recognised that the situation was unworkable and encouraged Cabrini to

¹⁰ Maria Susanna Garroni, 'Genere e transnazionalismo: una congregazione italiana negli Stati Uniti, 1889-1935' in *Sorelle d'oltreoceano*, ed. Maria Susanna Garroni (Rome: Carocci, 2008).

¹¹ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 27.

¹² *Ibid.*, 30.

¹³ Antonio Serrati, 'Relazioni', cited in Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 31.

found a missionary institute.¹⁴ She did so in November 1880 with seven sisters from the House of Providence.

Cabrini's practice also provides the opportunity to explore the under-researched progressive strand in Catholic education. She studied and worked in a context conducive to progressive educational practice. As Brian Simon has pointed out, pedagogy occupied an 'honoured place' in European education.¹⁵ Imelda Cipolla locates Cabrini's thought in the Lombardy of her time where 'the fervour of political life also nourished pedagogical studies and research on methods'.¹⁶ Similarly William Reese has shown that in the United States progressive, child-centred education developed within the broader context of the humanitarian movement of the antebellum and postbellum periods.¹⁷ In Italy education became part of a power struggle between Catholic and secular agents: as the state inscribed secular schooling in statute, the church supported the production of pedagogical literature.¹⁸ Within Catholic circles the nursery movement drew attention to the affective sphere.¹⁹ Both Reese and Cipolla refer to the influence of Pestalozzi, who was committed to developing the child's emotional and creative abilities as well as their intellect.

¹⁴ Una delle Sue Figlie, (1928) La Madre Francesca Saverio Cabrini, fondatrice e superiora generale delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù (Torino: SEI), 25. (The Anonymous author was Mother Saverio De Maria MSC).

¹⁵ Simon, 'Why no pedagogy in England?' in *Learners and Pedagogy*, 34.

¹⁶ Imelda Cipolla MSC, 'Francesca Saverio Cabrini Educatrice', in *Enciclopedia del Pensiero Pedagogico* (Brescia: La Scuola, 1976), 1.

¹⁷ William J Reese 'The Origins of Progressive Education', *History of Education Quarterly*, 41, no.1 (2001): 1-24.

¹⁸ Luciano Pazzaglia, 'Educazione e scuola nel programma dell'opera dei Congressi (1874-1904)' in *Scuola e società nell'Italia unita*, eds. Luciano Pazzaglia and Roberto Sani (Brescia: La Scuola).

¹⁹ Luciano Pazzaglia, 'Asili, Chiesa e mondo cattolico nell'Italia dell'800' in *Scuola*, eds. Pazzaglia and Sani.

Cabrini encountered progressive pedagogy in both Catholic and secular settings. She studied as a boarder at the normal school of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart in Arluno between 1863 and 1868. Their foundress Saint Teresa Verzeri (1801-1852) advocated child-centred pedagogy. She wrote that young people should be allowed 'a holy freedom, so that they may do willingly and with full agreement that which oppressed by command, would only be accomplished as a burden and with violence'.²⁰ She also advised that the choice of methods be adapted 'to the temperament, the inclinations, the circumstances of each person... and be according to the capacity of each'.²¹

Cabrini engaged with those of different views from an early age and was related to a well-known representative of the Left (*Sinistra storica*) in Liberal Italy. Agostino Depretis (1813-1887), who became prime minister of Italy three times between 1876 and 1887, was her father's first cousin. In 1868 she attended lectures on pedagogy at the secular Municipal Institute of Lodi and in 1871 she accompanied her older sister Rosa to pedagogical conferences consolidating her understanding.²² She later became known for her openness to those of different views when 'through the works of charity of her institute she conversed with Protestants and persons far removed from all religious principles'.²³ As superior of the MSC she actively recruited qualified teachers and other

²⁰ Teresa Eustochio Verzeri, *Libro dei Doveri*, vol. III, 347,349, cited in Vatican News, Saints, 'Teresa Eustochio Verzeri', http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20010610_verzeri_en.html (accessed 08/01/2015).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Rosa had gained her *patente* whilst Lombardy was ruled by Austria. Following Italian unification all teachers were required to gain the *patente* proscribed by the new government.

²³ 'Gennaro Cosenza, I miei pensieri all' annunzio della morte di Suor Francesca S Cabrini' in *In memoria della Rev.ma Madre Francesca Saverio Cabrini*, ed., MSC (New York: Bernasconi, 1919), 269.

well educated women. She also sent sisters on professional training courses in methods considered progressive, for example, those of Friedrich Froebel and Maria Montessori.²⁴

2.2 To contribute to work on international currents of educational ideas and practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

The contribution of the Catholic intellectual tradition to the history of educational ideas has been neglected of late, as Stephen McKinney has pointed out:

As western education has become increasingly secular in outlook, the contribution of the Catholic tradition to the history of ideas and education can often be explicitly diminished, denigrated or even ignored in contemporary academic discourse.²⁵

The experience of Catholic women religious provides a rich field to be mined for data on international currents of educational ideas and practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This period saw the development of the nation state, whilst the Catholic Church became more global. More Catholic religious institutes became transnational institutions. Studies of these institutions in their historical context can bring together the global, the national and the local. Many institutes of Catholic women religious founded in Europe mobilized their educational practice transnationally in this period as they served as missionaries

²⁴ William Reese refers to Froebel in his article on the origins of progressive education William J Reese, 'The Origins of Progressive Education', *History of Education Quarterly* 41, no1, (2001): 1-24. Peter Cunningham identified Montessori among the innovators who might be included in a prosopography of progressivism: Peter Cunningham, 'Innovators, Networks and Structures: Towards a Prosopography of Progressivism' *History of Education* 30, no. 5 (2001): 382.

²⁵ Stephen J McKinney, 'Catholic Education' in *Education in a Catholic Perspective*, eds. Stephen J McKinney and John Sullivan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 23.

ministering in imperial and diasporic settings. This is evident in the work of Deidre Raftery on Irish Catholic women religious.²⁶

Migrants, migration and the history of education is an under-researched field.²⁷ Interest in the area has grown recently, as seen, for example, in the work of Kevin Myers.²⁸ Italian congregations made a major contribution, due to the scale of Italian emigration and the personal interest taken by Pope Leo XIII in addressing the needs of Italian migrants. An estimated 13 million Italians left their homeland between 1880 and 1915, launching what Mark Choate has described as 'the largest emigration from any country in recorded world history'.²⁹ The period of this study of the MSC, covering their foundation and transnational expansion, was characterised by mobility and start-up communities. These were facilitated by network contacts as well as Church and government authorities. Many sisters travelled extensively. Cabrini herself crossed the Atlantic twenty-four times. They used all of the 'twelve main forms of mobility in the modern world' identified by John Urry in his work on the 'mobilities paradigm'.³⁰ They have not, however, featured in publications on the history of migrant workers. The collection on Italian migrant women workers, edited by

²⁶ Deidre Raftery, "'Je suis d'aucune Nation': The Recruitment and Identity of Irish Women Religious in the International Mission Field, c. 1840-1940'. *Paedagogica Historica*, 49, no.4 (2013):513-530; Deidre Raftery, 'From Kerry to Katong: Transnational Influences in Convent and Novitiate Life for the Sisters of the Infant Jesus, c. 1908-1950' In *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950: Convents, Classrooms and Colleges*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth, (New York and Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 31-42.

²⁷ This is indicated by the establishment of a working group on the subject by the International Standing Conference on the History of Education (ISCHE) in 2016.

²⁸ Kevin Myers, *Struggles for a past: Irish and Afro-Caribbean histories in England, 1951-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

²⁹ Mark Choate, *Emigrant Nation? The Making of Italy Abroad* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 1.

³⁰ They are: migration, business professional travel, discovery travel, medical, military, post-employment, 'trailing travel', within a diaspora, service workers to global cities, tourist and tourist gaze, to visit friends and relatives, work-related, John Urry, *Mobilities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 11.

Donna Giabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, makes no mention of teachers or women religious.³¹

Bringing an Italian perspective to the study of the international currents of educational ideas and practice also provides the opportunity to consider the transnational mobilisation of progressive educational practice. Saint Pope John Paul II and Francis, the current pope, have seen Cabrini's educational work with migrants as a progressive model for our time. John Paul II described it as a 'Pedagogy of Peace'.³² Francis sees this as rooted in Cabrini's ability 'to understand the less positive aspects of modernity, those aspects which impacted on the world's poverty stricken, which intellectuals and politicians did not want to see'.³³

2.3 Literature

I hope to build on the innovative work of Tom O'Donoghue and Maurice Whitehead. O'Donoghue has looked at the link between religion and practice in Catholic schools in the English-speaking world. In his 2001 work, *Upholding the Faith*, he identifies a number of traditions within Catholic education and focuses on a cold institutional, anti-intellectual tradition used with children from working families.³⁴ He links this tradition to the spiritual traditions of Jansenism and Rigorism and makes reference to Catholic theology. In his transnational study, *English Jesuit Education: Expulsion, Suppression, Survival and Restoration, 1762–1803*, Whitehead

³¹ Donna Giabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, eds. *Women, Gender and Transnational Lives, Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

³² John Paul II, 'Angelus', Sunday February 19, 1995. http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/es/angelus/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_ang_19950219.html (accessed 22/08/2016).

³³ 'Il Papa, i migranti "Accettare le leggi di chi accoglie"', *Corriere della Sera*, November 8, 2017.

³⁴ Tom O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

adopted an original transnational approach to institutional history.³⁵

Exploring curriculum, spirituality and leadership he demonstrated the evolution of an intellectual Catholic educational tradition. He has shown the value of taking a wider view of a school rather than considering it 'from an institutional historical perspective'.³⁶

3 Theoretical Framework

This section sets out the theoretical framework, within which the concept of 'Catholic educational practice' is interrogated. This theoretical framework has been employed bearing in mind Harold Silver's caveat regarding historical analysis, 'conducted as an adjunct to case studies in the relevant theory'.³⁷ The study seeks rather, as McCulloch and Richardson put it, 'to work not toward closure but towards open and continuing cultural debate'.³⁸ Nevertheless, as Phil Gardner has pointed out, 'historical endeavour always carries profound ontological and epistemological assumptions'.³⁹ These ontological assumptions, regarding the nature of being and epistemological assumptions, regarding the nature of knowledge, inform the categories used for analysis. David Scott argues that researchers need to justify how these categories have been drawn and this section aims to do that.⁴⁰

³⁵ Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education: Expulsion, Suppression, Survival and Restoration, 1762–1803*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

³⁶ Ibid., 8.

³⁷ Harold Silver, *Education as History: Interpreting Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Education* (London: Routledge, 1983), 240.

³⁸ Gary McCulloch and William Richardson, *Historical Research in Educational Settings*. (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), 3.

³⁹ Phil Gardener, 'Autobiographical Reflection', *History of Education Researcher* 99 (May 2017):18-19.

⁴⁰ David Scott, 'Interpretivism as a Theory of Knowledge' in *The BERA/SAGE Handbook of Educational Research*, eds. Dominic Wyse, Neil Selwyn, Emma Smith and Larry E Suter, (London: Sage ,2017), 376-394.

The fundamental assumption that educational practice is always more than a set of value-neutral techniques is central to this framework. As Richard Pring has argued:

“Educational practice” brings together a wide range of activities which embody the values and moral aims which they are intended to promote.⁴¹

Values and moral aims derive from a tradition, as Alastair MacIntyre points out, ‘all reasoning takes place within the context of some traditional mode of thought.’⁴² He also understands practices to be embedded in an historical tradition. In history of education, Susannah Wright has demonstrated this in relation to practice in moral and citizenship education, informed by secular tradition.⁴³ In a similar vein, Tom Woodin has shown how Co-operative education draws from a rich historical tradition.⁴⁴ The term ‘tradition’ is, however, used in a variety of ways. The use of the term in history is explored in a well-known collection edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, focusing on ‘the invention of tradition’.⁴⁵ Hobsbawm defines ‘invented tradition’ as follows:

‘Invented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Richard Pring, ‘Education as a Moral Practice’, *Journal of Moral Education* 30, no.2 (2001): 102.

⁴² Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 2007, 3rd edition), 222.

⁴³ Susannah Wright, *Morality and Citizenship in English Schools: Secular Approaches, 1897-1944* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

⁴⁴ Tom Woodin ‘An Introduction to co-operative education in the past and present’ in *Co-operation, Learning and Co-operative Values*, ed., Tom Woodin (International: Routledge, 2015), 1-13.

⁴⁵ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁴⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Introduction: Inventing Traditions’ in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds., Hobsbawm and Ranger 1.

He also identifies 'invariance' as 'the object and characteristic' of traditions. This invariance distinguishes them from 'customs'.⁴⁷ The limits of Hobsbaw'n's exploration of the concept of tradition were highlighted in 2001 by Guy Beine, in relation to cultural history.⁴⁸ Beine identifies adaptability as a feature of tradition, due to 'the emphasis on transmission as an intrinsic component of tradition'.⁴⁹ He argues that this 'calls attention to the inherently dynamic nature of tradition. Since traditions are not artefacts but cultural practices'.⁵⁰ The adaptability of an educational tradition was explored by Sir Fred Clarke in *Education and Social Change: An English Interpretation* published 1940.⁵¹ He traces the 'capacity of the English educational tradition to adapt itself without undue friction or shattering to the demands of a changed order'.⁵² Tom Woodin has shown the adaptability of the Co-operative educational tradition since the mid-nineteenth century.⁵³ Marcel Sarot has considered Hobsbaw'n's concept of 'invention of tradition' in relation to religious tradition and considers it 'a rather under-developed notion in Hobsbaw'n himself'.⁵⁴

Quentin Skinner has shown that understanding concepts requires us to 'go back to the historical juncture' at which this way of thinking was first

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁸ Guy Beine, 'The Invention of Tradition?' *The History Review*, XI1 (2001) available: https://www.academia.edu/21884692/The_Invention_of_Tradition (Accessed 07/07/2018).

⁴⁹ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁵¹ Fred Clarke, *Education and Social Change: An English Interpretation* (London: Sheldon Books, Christian News-Letter Books No 3, 1940).

⁵² Ibid., 1.

⁵³ Tom Woodin 'An Introduction', 6-9.

⁵⁴ Marcel Sarot, 'Counterfactuals and the Invention of Religious Traditions' in *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition: Papers read at a NOSTER Conference in Soesterberg, January 4-6, 1999*, Eds., J. W. van Henten, & A. W. J. Houtepen (Studies in theology and religion No. 3) Assen: Koninklijke Van Gorcum BV 2001), 10. Available: <https://pure.uvt.nl/portal/files/1455696/Counterfactuals.pdf> (accessed 07/09/2018).

articulated and developed.⁵⁵ Yves Congar considers the origins of the tradition in which Catholic education is embedded. He looks at the nature of the 'tradition', which has transmitted the 'Tradition' (with a capital 'T') or deposit of Christian faith, educating Christians, since the time of Christ.⁵⁶ Christ left a community, not a book. The members had been taught by 'living experience', as well as the words of Christ.⁵⁷ Initially the faith 'Tradition' was learnt from the apostles and the way of life of the community. This lived tradition was documented by the Church Fathers.⁵⁸ It has been clarified further by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. Together with scripture it forms Catholic 'Tradition'. Congar, like Beine, draws attention to means of transmission as also part of the 'Tradition'. John Marmion in his pamphlet, *Catholic Traditions in Education*, provides an historical survey of Catholic educational 'traditions'.⁵⁹ Over the centuries these have formed part of the broader Catholic educational tradition of transmitting the Christian faith. For example, he shows a conflict of opinion within the broader tradition, in the second century. This was between those who wanted to exclude or include classical learning. The former tradition wished to focus solely on Christian topics. The latter tradition argued that in order to convert pagans, it was necessary to understand them and classical learning was needed. MacIntyre argues that thriving traditions 'embody continuities of conflict'.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Quentin Skinner, *Liberty Before Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 109.

⁵⁶ Yves Congar OP, *The Meaning of Tradition* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004) Translated from original, *La Tradition et La Vie de l'Église*.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁸ These were the first Christian theologians who documented the 'Tradition'. Initially they were contemporaries of Christ's apostles and subsequently those taught by them in the first eight centuries.

⁵⁹ John Marmion, *Catholic Traditions in Education* (Macclefield: St Edward's Press, 1986).

⁶⁰ MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 222.

The work of Servais Pinckaers (1925-2008), demonstrates two traditions evident in the teaching of Catholic morality in educational institutions and pastoral care, in an historical survey from the Old Testament to the twentieth century.⁶¹ The first tradition, 'a morality of happiness', is evident in the work of the Church Fathers and Thomas Aquinas. It presents the Ten Commandments 'as a preparation for the exercise of the virtues, especially the love of God and neighbour.'⁶² Pinckaers argues that the Church Fathers did not 'separate spirituality from morality'.⁶³ At the end of the Middle Ages, however, influenced by the work of William of Ockham (c.1295-1394), 'moral theology focused more and more on the relationship between law and liberty viewing it from the perspective of obligation'.⁶⁴ This 'morality of obligation', became the dominant influence from the late fourteenth century. In Christian education and formation, this tradition separated morality from the spiritual experience of God's love.⁶⁵

The conceptualising of 'religion' is also important in interrogating sources for evidence of Catholic aims and values in educational practice. The work of Baron Friedrich Von Hugel (1852-1925), identifying 'elements' of religion, has been used. He identified three elements of religion in his 1908 work on Saint Catherine of Genoa and her friends.⁶⁶ They are: 'the institutional', 'the intellectual' and 'the mystical'. 'The institutional' encompasses the external signs of religion which impact on the senses

⁶¹ Servais Pinckaers OP, *Morality: The Catholic View*. (Indiana: St Augustine's Press, 2001).

⁶² Ibid., 60.

⁶³ Ibid., 32.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 32.

⁶⁵ Servais Pinckaers OP, *The Sources of Christian Ethics* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 255-7.

⁶⁶ Friedrich Von Hugel, *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and her Friends* (London: Dent, 1923, 2nd edition), 51-3.

and memory; 'the intellectual' is found in thought systems and philosophy; 'the mystical' or interior experiences are known and felt through interior and exterior action as the experience of love empowers the will to loving actions. It is not difficult or unusual to find evidence of the institutional and intellectual elements in work on faith education. The mystical aspect of religion does, however, make ontological and epistemological assumptions. Margaret Archer has pointed out, that relationships formed in the transcendent are usually excluded from academic work due to an empiricism 'which illegitimately confines investigation to observables', enabling atheism to be 'presented as an epistemologically neutral position'.⁶⁷ Archer argues that religious experience should be submitted to the same scrutiny as other experience. She uses the example of Teresa of Avila to demonstrate this.⁶⁸ She shows how Teresa's experience of God's love impacts on her human relationships, as it motivates and empowers her to love others.

Human relationships are central to education. Joseph Dunne argues that the good of the practice of teaching is 'helping others to share in' the goods of subject disciplines.⁶⁹ This assumes a relationship between teacher and pupils. Nel Noddings argues that 'teaching is thoroughly relational'.⁷⁰ Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* focuses on teacher-pupil relations which both result in and develop from dialogical

⁶⁷ Margaret S Archer, 'Models of Man: the Admission of Transcendence' in *Transcendence: Critical Realism and God*, eds., Margaret S Archer, Andrew Collier and Douglas V Prospora (London: Routledge 2004), 63.

⁶⁸ Margaret S Archer, "On Understanding Religious Experience: St Teresa as a Challenge to Social Theory" in *Transcendence: Critical Realism and God*, eds., Margaret S Archer, Andrew Collier and Douglas V Prospora, (London: Routledge 2004), 139.

⁶⁹ Joseph Dunne, 'Arguing for Teaching as a Practice' in *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning*, eds. Joseph Dunne and Pádraig Hogan (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 186.

⁷⁰ Nel Noddings, 'Is Teaching a Practice?' in *Education and Practice*: eds., Dunne and Hogan, 167.

pedagogy.⁷¹ This is particularly significant in relation to educating migrants. John Urry, in his work on mobility, has pointed out that ‘it is the social relations which stem from mobility that are crucial.’⁷² Margaret Archer’s work with Pierpaolo Donati on the relational human subject is helpful in analysing relationships in educational practice.⁷³ They argue that ‘relational goods’ emerge from joint action. Relational goods are explained as follows:

Relational goods are emergent, being generated and sustained by the subjects constituting them and possess their own properties: to motivate, to facilitate and to constrain the parties involved in them and to affect matters beyond them.⁷⁴

Cabrini’s relationship with God is relevant to her educational practice. Researching it requires some understanding of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Philip Mulhern OP has shown that the tradition of Christ’s heart as a symbol of God’s love for each person originated in the Bible.⁷⁵ He argues that the principles of the tradition were ‘formulated by the early Fathers of the church from their understanding of Sacred Scripture’.⁷⁶ Jordan Aumann OP and Timothy O’Donnell have demonstrated how these ancient principles have been maintained as the devotional tradition was adapted to new historical circumstances.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (International: Penguin, 1996).

⁷² Urry, *Mobilities*, 194.

⁷³ Pierpaolo Donati and Margaret S. Archer, *The Relational Subject* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁷⁵ Philip Mulhern OP, ‘Devotion to the Sacred Heart in the Fathers of the Church’, in Jordan Aumann OP, Philip Mulhern OP and Timothy O’Donnell, *Devotion to the Heart of Jesus* (Rome: Institute of Spirituality, Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, 1982), 1-48.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 48.

⁷⁷ Jordan Aumann OP, ‘Evolution of Devotion to the Heart of Jesus’; Timothy O’Donnell ‘Revelations of the Sacred Heart and Magisterial Teaching’ in Aumann et al, *Devotion to the Heart of Jesus*, 49-127;1128-227.

Maria Regina Canale has shown the impact of a strong local tradition of Sacred Heart devotion, which Cabrini experienced in her home, parish and school.⁷⁸ In mid-nineteenth century Lombardy, the spirituality of Frances de Sales (1567-1622) was influential. Pinckaers points out that de Sales succeeded in re-establishing the link between spiritual experience and morality.⁷⁹ He did not accept prevailing opinion within the Church, that mystical experience was the preserve of 'a chosen few belonging to the religious state'.⁸⁰ De Sales promoted Sacred Heart devotion and successive bishops in Northern Italy did likewise, from the late eighteenth century. This was in large part an attempt to counter the influence of Jansenism in the area. Jansenism developed under the influence of a contemporary of De Sales, Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638). The Jansenists promoted the belief that Christ suffered and died to save a pre-destined few. The 'view which attributed to the divine nature universal merciful love' promoted by devotees of the Sacred Heart was completely unacceptable.⁸¹ Jansenist beliefs were condemned as heresy by successive popes between 1653 and 1713.

Lucetta Scaraffia argues that the devotion motivated men and women to different activity within their historical circumstances.⁸² Male activity was political, promoting the devotion as central to the reconstitution of Christian order after the French Revolution. This is demonstrated in the planning and building of *Sacré-Cœur* basilica in Paris, following the Paris

⁷⁸ Maria Regina Canale MSC, *La Gloria del Cuore di Gesu nella spiritualita do Santa Francesca S.Cabrini* (Rome: Centro Cabriniana, 1990), 84-94.

⁷⁹ Servais Pinckaers OP, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 256.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁸¹ Philip Mulhern OP, 'Evolution of the Devotion to the Heart of Jesus' in *Devotion to the Heart of Jesus*, 163.

⁸² Lucetta Scaraffia, *Francesca Cabrini. (Milan:Paoline, 2004), 77-89.*

Commune, as an act of reparation. In women reparation took a different form, as they offered themselves as contemplatives. Following unification in Italy, between 1866 and 1873, religious institutes were suppressed. Those performing useful social functions, however, were spared. This contributed to an increase in institutes of active sisters. Many were founded to honour the Sacred Heart, for example Teresa Eustochio Verzeri's Daughters of the Sacred Heart, whose school Cabrini attended as boarder.

Cabrini also wished to honour the Sacred Heart in establishing her Institute. The love of the Sacred Heart is central to the MSC charism. The term 'charism' has been used increasingly since the Second Vatican Council in relation to religious institutes. It literally means a gift of the Holy Spirit. In relation to Catholic religious institutes it is understood as a gift to the founder, lived in communion with the members as they embody it in the work of their institute. In the case of the MSC the charism is summed up as 'bearing the love of Christ to the world'. Canale explains this as 'to love as if with Christ's heart and carry out his actions.'⁸³ She explains that Cabrini's mystical experience motivated her to action:

In Mother Cabrini, the contemplative dimension led her to an intense and active participation in the concrete reality of events and everyday situations.⁸⁴

In the opening sentence of the 1881 Rule for the MSC, she wrote that 'the Heart of Jesus inflamed the souls' of the co-founders with his love.'⁸⁵ The Latin motto of the new Institute was '*Ad Majorem Gloriam Sacratissimi*

⁸³ Canale, *La Gloria*, 238.

⁸⁴ Canale, *La Gloria*, 239.

⁸⁵ 'Regole dell'Istituto delle Missionarie del S.Cuore copiata dall'originale manoscritto del 1883', ('Regole dell'Istituto', G1a1),1.

Cordis Jesu', shown on documents as, AMGSSCJ, meaning 'For the Greater Glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus'. She frequently quoted '*Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat*' or 'I can do all things in him who strengthens me'.⁸⁶ It became a second motto for the MSC and the key means to achieve the 'Glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus'. Cabrini's supporter, Leo XIII, who promoted devotion to the Sacred Heart, saw it as a means to inspire devotees to love of their neighbours:

there is in the Sacred Heart a symbol and a sensible image of the infinite love of Jesus Christ which moves us to love one another.⁸⁷

This can have a direct impact on teacher-pupil relationships. The work of Edith Stein, discussed in the literature review, shows how Teresa of Avila's loving relationship with God is mirrored in her educational practice. The literature review also shows how Tom O'Donoghue identified the negative impact of a tradition informed by Jansenism and Irish Rigorism on relationships between members of religious congregations, which in turn impacted on teacher-pupil relationships in schools.⁸⁸

The relationship of Mary, the mother of Christ, with her son has been a source of inspiration for many Catholic women religious who aimed to develop motherly approaches to teaching. Erica Moretti has shown that she was also the inspiration for the social motherhood of Italian feminists such as Maria Montessori and Sibilla Aleramo.⁸⁹ Both groups focused on a

⁸⁶ This is from Philippians 4:13.

⁸⁷ Pope Leo XIII, *Annum Sacrum, Encyclical on Consecration to the Sacred Heart*, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_25051899_annum-sacrum.html (accessed 07/07/2018).

⁸⁸ Tom O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922-1965* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

⁸⁹ Erica Moretti, 'Beyond Biological Ties: Sibilla Aleramo, Maria Montessori, and the Construction of Social Motherhood', *Italian Culture*, 32, no.1 (2014): 32-49.

particular aspect of Mary's role in scripture. The self-sacrificing *Mater Dolorosa*, portrayed holding her dead son was significant for many in nineteenth century Italy. It was, however, Mary with the title of 'Maria Ss. delle Grazie' who was central to the origins and work of the MSC. The title may be translated literally as 'Most Holy Mary of the Graces' but is more usually rendered as 'Our Lady of Grace'. It presents Mary as a spiritual mother who obtains graces or favours from her son. This role is evident in John's gospel where she tells Christ the wine has run out when they are at a wedding in Cana and he responds by turning water into wine.⁹⁰ Focus on Mary's role as an intercessor increased following the apparition of Mary to a Daughter of Charity, Catherine Labouré, in Paris in 1830. Mary requested that medals presenting her as a mediatrix be struck. These were distributed widely in the Catholic world, including by MSC sisters. They became known as 'miraculous medals'. When looking for suitable premises for her new institute in Codogno, Cabrini prayed before an image of 'Maria Ss. delle Grazie' in a former Franciscan church. A property was found behind the church. Cabrini therefore referred to 'Maria Ss. delle Grazie' as the founder of the MSC. Cabrini frequently advised sisters to take her as a model and to imitate her virtues.

The concept of 'virtue' is important, as Cabrini makes frequent reference to the virtues. MacIntyre sees virtues as essential to all thriving practices. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, at the University of Birmingham, refers to them as 'positive personal strengths'.⁹¹ Vivian

⁹⁰ John II: 1-12.

⁹¹ The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, A Framework for Character Education in Schools, Available: <https://www.jubileecentre.ac.uk/userfiles/jubileecentre/pdf/character-education/Framework%20for%20Character%20Education.pdf> (Accessed 11/07/2018).

Boland explains that Thomas Aquinas understood virtues as dispositions.⁹² Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick in their work on disposition in teacher education define a disposition as a ‘tendency towards particular patterns of behaviour’.⁹³ Mother Cabrini saw education as a means for learners to develop the dispositions of the Heart of Christ. Maria Barbagallo, a former Superior General of the MSC explains this:

In relation to education the love of God should transform our heart in order to render it as similar as possible to the heart of Jesus so that every work done is the expression of the Love that God has for humanity.⁹⁴

The concept of ‘forming the heart’ of the learner was central to Cabrini’s understanding of educational practice. Investigating MSC practice for evidence of ‘forming the heart’ poses challenges in the twenty-first century. For many the word ‘heart’ is charged with sentimentality. Once again adopting the advice of Quentin Skinner and returning to the historical context in which the concept developed is helpful. The dominant concept of ‘the heart’ in the West today is framed in an intellectual tradition dating back to the Enlightenment. The ‘heart’ is understood as referring solely to the emotions. Beata Toth points out that during the Enlightenment:

The biblical heart, which originally comprised reason together with volition and sensibility forming an indivisible unity, broke up and gave way to the independent self-supporting modern reason and the juxtaposed modern and purely emotional heart.⁹⁵

Wendy Wright has identified this ‘biblical understanding’ in the Salesian tradition going back to Saint Francis de Sales. She explains that for Francis

⁹² Vivian Boland OP, *St Thomas Aquinas* (International: Continuum, 2007), 173.

⁹³ Arthur L Costa and Bena Kallick, *Dispositions* (Thousand Oaks: Corwin, 2014), 1.

⁹⁴ Maria Barbagallo MSC, *‘Buon Cristiani e Buon Cittadini’* (Codogno: MSC, 2013), 55.

⁹⁵ Beata Toth, “‘Our Most Serious Deficiency-Disease’ – Reason, Faith and the Rediscovery of Sensibility”, *New Blackfriars* 90 (2009): 728.

‘heart involves intellect and reason as well as affection and will’.⁹⁶

Cabrini’s contemporary, Saint John Bosco, the founder of the Salesian order, understood it in this biblical way. Imelda Cipolla MSC uses this understanding in explaining Cabrini’s educational thinking. She explains that Cabrini wished ‘to form the mind in truth and to educate the heart in such a way that what is held in the intellect will become the norm of life’.⁹⁷ The leaders of Liberal Italy were inspired by Enlightenment thinking. The statutory framework which they developed for education after unification focused on reason without relating it to the emotions. Cabrini articulated her educational ideas, which emphasized forming the mind and the heart, in the context of this discourse.

In considering whether Cabrini’s ideas provided a progressive alternative whilst working within the statutory framework, the term ‘progressive education’ has been used in four ways. The first is with regard to child-centred pedagogy as identified by William Reese as well as Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman.⁹⁸ The second is education to contribute to social-reconstruction also explored by Martin and Goodman. The third is in relation to finding new educational opportunities. This is particularly pertinent to the late nineteenth century and the emergence of new kinds of learning environments both formal and informal. The fourth use of the term ‘progressive education’ is in consideration of the growth of a professional female teaching force. The use of this theoretical framework aims to address aspects of faith education, which may seem ethereal, in a

⁹⁶ Wendy M Wright, *Heart Speaks to Heart: The Salesian Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004), 32.

⁹⁷ Imelda Cipolla MSC, ‘Francesca Saverio Cabrini Educatrice’, in *Enciclopedia del pensiero pedagogico*, (Brescia: La Scuola, 1976), 10. Photocopy provided by Sister Maria Regina Canale MSC.

⁹⁸ Reese, ‘The Origins of Progressive Education’; Jane Martin and Joyce Goodman, ‘Reforming lives? Progressivism, Leadership and Educational Change’, *History of Education* 30, no. 5 (2001): 409-412.

concrete way.⁹⁹ Doing so facilitates the presentation of the work of a Catholic woman religious whose educational practice combined religious orthodoxy with progressive pedagogy. It is therefore central to this thesis making an original contribution to the field of history of education.

4 Research Questions

The research addresses three questions.

4. 1. How did Mother Cabrini understand Catholic educational practice?

Cabrini's aim for MSC schools provides a focus for researching her understanding of Catholic educational practice. She used consistent wording for the aim in formal documents between 1880 and 1913, including the original 1881 Rule, the 1907 Constitutions and a 1913 booklet of job descriptions. It reads as follows:

to furnish the mind of the pupils with cognitive and ornamental¹⁰⁰ competencies in order to have the opportunity to form their hearts to the love of Religion and the practice of virtue. The teaching will be adjusted to meet the needs of those being taught¹⁰¹

This aim sums up Cabrini's understanding of the principles of child-centred education. The central purpose is the full growth of each child rather than the economic needs of society, which are not mentioned. As the needs of each child and group vary the teaching methods need to be flexible, centred on the needs of the child. She refers to three aspects of the pupil's development: the cognitive, the ornamental or creative and the moral. The latter is not separated from the first two. Activities to promote

⁹⁹ See for example, Mariannne A Larsen, *The Making and Shaping of the Victorian Teacher* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 91.

¹⁰⁰ For an exploration of the term 'ornamentals' see Margaret A Nash, 'A Means of Honourable Support: Art and Music in Women's Education in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *History of Education Quarterly* 53, no.1 (2013): 45-63.

¹⁰¹ MSC, 'Regola dell'Istituto', 25. '*formare i loro cuori all'amore della Religione e alla pratica delle virtu.*'

a child's cognitive and creative development are rather seen as providing opportunities 'to form their hearts to the love of religion and the practice of virtue'. Whilst Cabrini wished to promote love of the Catholic faith, the reference to the 'love of religion' in this context has another meaning. In his work on the virtues Aquinas describes religion as the virtue facilitating a human being's reverent relationship with God.¹⁰² In referring to 'the love of religion', Cabrini is referring to the love emergent from this 'reverent relationship'. This is the love that she and her sisters hoped to take to the world. If the child grows as a loving virtuous person they will do likewise.

Examination of the practice she employed and promoted to achieve this is the central focus in addressing this question. Which curriculum and teaching methods would she wish to employ to develop pupils 'cognitive and ornamental competences'? Examination of the practice she employed and promoted to achieve this is the central focus in addressing this question. Which curriculum and teaching methods would she wish to employ to develop pupils 'cognitive and ornamental competences'? What kind of practice and teacher pupil relationships facilitated the pupil's growth as a loving, virtuous person? Universal education in Italy was intended to limit rather than strengthen the influence of Religion.¹⁰³ Evidence for how she engaged in contemporary discourse on the place of religion in education is pertinent to answering the question.

¹⁰² Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologiæ of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Second and Revised Edition, 1920, Literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/> (accessed 20/08/2018.).

¹⁰³ Giancarlo Rocca, 'La formazione delle Religiose Insegnanti tra Otto e Novecento' in *Cattolici, Educazione e Trasformazioni Socio-culturali in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*, ed., Luciano Pazzaglia (Brescia: La Scuola, 1999), 433; Simonetta Soldani, 'Chequered Routes to Secondary Education: Italy' in *Girls' Secondary Education in the Western World*, eds., Joyce Goodman, Rebecca Rogers and James C. Albisetti (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, May 2010), 59-76.

4.2 How can Mother Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice be seen in the work of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

What were the conditions needed to establish Cabrini's practice? How were they put into place as start-up commenced? This might include: aspects of the materiality of schooling and finance; relationships with authorities and network contacts; size and composition of the founding community. How did she facilitate good relationships within the convent community? Lucetta Scaraffia has described Cabrini as 'the most successful female founder-entrepreneur' of the period 1850-1988.¹⁰⁴ Did her business acumen contribute?

Data on pupils, staffing and school organisation is important in considering how practice in schools was suited to the needs of pupils. Class organisation also contributes to the picture, for example were there mixed age groupings? As the majority of teaching sisters and pupils were migrants, pupil and staff mobility is also important. The subjects of the curriculum give an indication of how cognitive and ornamental competences were developed. Are the 'institutional', 'intellectual' and 'mystical' elements of the Catholic religion identified by Von Hugel evident in the practice? The gendered nature of the curriculum needs consideration. Mary Louise Sullivan has argued 'Mother Cabrini's emphasis on the preservation of cultural heritage ran counter to the assimilation ideology of the day.'¹⁰⁵ How did this translate into classroom

¹⁰⁴ Lucetta Scaraffia, "Christianity Has Liberated Her", 263.

¹⁰⁵ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 159.

practice with bi-lingual pupils? How did the sisters act as cultural mediators? What kinds of educational work were undertaken in the local communities?

Teaching methods are examined for evidence of practice to 'form the heart'. Cabrini's used the term, '*amorevolezza*' or 'loving care'. Did virtue permeate the practice through exhortations and example or did sisters hope pupils would develop a sense of obligation by obeying numerous rules? How did assessment procedures, including examinations, prizes and inspections, contribute? What was the role of festive oratories, sodalities and other participative devotional experience? Was incorporation and transnational mobilisation of 'modern' pedagogy a distinguishing factor influenced by the 'honoured place' of pedagogy in the educational tradition of countries in continental Europe identified by Simon and Cipolla.¹⁰⁶ How does it compare with that of female Catholic contemporaries such as Maria Montessori, who also promoted child-centred learning?

The education and formation of teaching students and sisters is also investigated for evidence of Cabrini's educational practice. This includes opportunities for the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills. Opportunities to deepen understanding of the faith and to support the development and the practice of virtue are considered in relation to the annual Spiritual Exercises and the input of Cabrini and superiors. How were problems and failure dealt with? How far was Cabrini a supportive delegator? Delegation has been an important issue in considering the

¹⁰⁶ Simon, 'Why no pedagogy', 34; Cipolla, 'Francesca Saverio Cabrini Educatrice', 1

establishment of effective leadership by superiors, who were also headmistresses.

4.3 How far did Mother Cabrini develop a coherent approach to Catholic educational practice?

Was there a central unifying principle from which the practice stemmed? Did it act as a thread to hold the practice together? Was this a philosophy of education? Did it provide a reference point as Cabrini established educational practice? Yves Congar considers that educational activities should embody such a unifying principle. They should:

Enshrine and safeguard a certain spirit, should comprise external forms and customs in such perfect harmony with this spirit that they mould it, surround it and clothe it so to speak, without stifling its natural spontaneity or checking its innate strength and freedom.¹⁰⁷

Was it an example of the ‘new applications of ancient principles’ referred to by Fred Clarke?¹⁰⁸ Was it a new lived tradition of Catholic education? Did it provide a progressive alternative to modernity’s secular provision? If so is this a ‘hidden history’, a rare female contribution to the Catholic intellectual heritage?

5 Method and Structure

Whilst this study focusses on the work of an individual I do not adopt a biographical, life history approach. Rather Cabrini’s work provides a focus for consideration of relationships between established educational traditions and ideals and emerging new social and economic realities. It is a similar approach to that taken by Gary McCulloch’s work on Cyril

¹⁰⁷ Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Clarke, *Education and Social Change*, 2.

Norwood, John Marmion's on Cornelia Connelly and Mary Newman's on Margaret Fletcher.¹⁰⁹ Given the nature and extent of the educational provision established by Cabrini, a multiple case study methodology has been adopted. The expansion of the MSC is considered in three phases: the Italian (1880-1888), the Transatlantic (April 1889-1895) and the Global (1896-1917). A case study has been completed from each phase.

This introduction is followed by a further eight chapters. Chapter 2, a literature review, looks at the extent to which literature in the field of history of education relates Catholic educational practice to the Catholic religion. The works chosen include some addressing the work of Catholic educational theorists and others exploring that of Catholic practitioners in schools and in the education and formation of Catholic teachers. Chapter 3 on methodology explains the multiple case study methodology as well as the rationale for the choice of each case study. There is a detailed discussion of the primary sources used, including reference to those giving the voice of the teacher and the pupil. Whilst the latter is limited, the former is well represented. Chapter 4, 'Provision Across Nine Nations', provides the global context for the three case studies, making use of maps and tables to present large quantities of data. It considers both opportunities and limitations and the role of authorities and networks. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are case studies of Rome, New Orleans and London respectively. Each one considers the establishment of the conditions for Cabrini's educational practice and the educational practice evident in the

¹⁰⁹ Gary McCulloch, *Cyril Norwood and the Ideal of Secondary Education* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); John Marmion, 'Cornelia Connelly's Work In Education, 1848-1879' (PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1984); Mary V Newman, 'The Educational Work of the Catholic Women's League in England 1906-1923' (PhD thesis, Institute of Education, University of London, 2010).

educational work of the foundation, from inception to Cabrini's death in 1917. This includes fee-paying and free schools and a programme for resident teaching students in Rome; schools for the poor and an orphanage in New Orleans and schools for the emerging middle class and wealthy educational migrants in London. The education and formation of sisters is considered in all three studies. Chapter 8, 'Cabrini's Educational Practice', brings the three case studies together. It draws overall lessons considering consistency, identifying any differences and evaluating the extent to which these cases can be seen as representative of practice within the MSC in this period. Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by summarising the findings in relation to the research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This review looks at how literature in the field of history of education relates educational practice by Catholic religious institutes to the Catholic religion. An introduction explores the background to the current availability of sources and the broader historiography of Catholic women religious, which has impacted on research on Catholic teaching sisters. The relationship between the Catholic religion and educational practice is explored considering literature on both Catholic educational theorists and that on Catholic educational practice.

There has been significant progress on the inclusion of religion in history of education in the last fifty years. Asa Briggs, writing in the first edition of *History of Education* in 1972, emphasised the need for religion to be 'put in':

The study of the history of education is best considered as part of the wider study of the history of society, social history broadly interpreted with the politics, the economics and, it is necessary to add, the religion put in.¹

Writing in the same journal in 2012, James Arthur referred to the 'increased acceptance of tradition-based reasoning in academia'.² The work of Stephen Parker, Rob Freathy and Jonathan Doney provides good examples of current interest.³ In 'Religions and the History of Education: a

¹ Asa Briggs 'The Study of the History of Education', *History of Education* 1, no.1 (1972): 5.

² James Arthur, 'Christian commentary and education 1930–1960', *History of Education* 41, no.3 (2012): 359.

³ For example: Jonathan Doney, Stephen Parker, Rob Freathy, 'Enriching the historiography of Religious Education: insights from oral life history', *History of Education* 46 no 4 (2017), 436-458.

Historiography', part of the fortieth anniversary edition of *History of Education*, Deidre Raftery identified a wide range of literature on religions and the history of education. Her search for 'religion' in the journal's database produced more than five hundred results.⁴ A number of the articles identified were on Catholic teaching sisters. The considerable body of work on their role in the field of history of education is evident in the 2009 historiographical study, *The Forgotten Contribution of the Teaching Sisters*, by Bart Hellinckx, Frank Simon, and Marc Depaepe.⁵ The authors consider the sisters to have been 'forgotten', due to the lack of any general overview of historical research on Catholic women religious as teachers, at the time. It includes a 38 page bibliography of works in English, French, German and Spanish published between 1985 and 2009. Works in Italian are not included.⁶ It builds on historiographical work initiated by Fr Michael Perko for the United States; Tom O'Donoghue and Anthony Potts for the whole of the English-speaking world and Rebecca Rogers for France.⁷ A significant factor in the completion of the scholarly work to which these volumes refer has been access to religious archives which, as Lucetta Scaraffia and Gabriella Zarri have found, contain:

⁴ Deirdre Raftery, 'Religions and the History of Education: a Historiography', *History of Education* 41, no.1 (2012): 41-56.

⁵ Bart Hellinckx, Frank Simon and Mark Depaepe, *The Forgotten Contribution of the Teaching Sisters: A Historiographical Essay on the Educational Work of Catholic Women Religious in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. (Leuven: Leuven University, 2009).

⁶ See, for example, the work of Fulvio De Giorgi, Roberto Sanni and Giancarlo Rocca.

⁷ F M Perko, 'Religious Schooling in America: An Historiographical Reflection', *History of Education Quarterly* 40, no 3 (2000):320-338; Tom O' Donoghue & Anthony Potts, 'Researching the Lives of Catholic Teachers who were members of Religious Orders: Historiographical Considerations', *History of Education* 33 no.4 (2004):469-481; Rebecca Rogers, 'L'Éducation des Filles: Un Siècle et Demi d'historiographie' in *L'éducation des Filles, XVIIIe–XXIe Siècles. Hommage à Françoise Mayeur*, eds. Pierre Caspard, Jean-Noël Luc et Rebecca Rogers, Numéro spécial de la revue *Histoire de l'éducation* 115-116 (septembre 2007):37-79.

exceptionally rich and well-preserved documentation on women's religious orders, which is rare for a field in which it is generally difficult to find sources on or about women.⁸

After the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) many congregations responded to '*Perfectae Caritas*, The Decree on the Up-to-Date Renewal of Religious Life'.⁹ This 1965 publication called for congregations to return to the 'sources of the whole of the Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes'.¹⁰ In the following two decades congregations identified, studied and published original sources and used them to produce scholarly works. The MSC was no exception, producing printed versions of four collections of Cabrini's writings. The kind of detailed sources useful to historians of education, such as the 2002 *Epistolario*, containing 2054 of Cabrini's letters, have, however, taken longer.¹¹ A very useful edited collection of documents, relating to education, only appeared in 2013.¹² Like many of the publications by Institutes of Catholic women religious, they are not available commercially.

The question of hermeneutics, or the principles and practices used by historians to interpret and validate findings from empirical investigations, has been of interest within the field of history of education, as demonstrated by Phil Gardner's 2010 *Hermeneutics, History and Memory*.¹³ In a 2002 article, Fulvio De Giorgi identified three

⁸ Lucetta Scaraffia and Gabriella Zarri, 'Introduction' in *Women and Faith*, eds., Scaraffia & Zarri, 1.

⁹ *Perfectae Caritas*, Decree on the Up-to-Date Renewal of Religious Life. In *Vatican Council II*, ed., Austin Flannery OP, (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1975):611-706.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 612.

¹¹ Imelda Cipolla MSC and Maria Regina Canale MSC, eds., *Epistolario di Santa Francesca Saverio Cabrini: 1868-1917*, volumes 1-5 (Rome: L'Istituto Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù, 2002).

¹² Maria Barbagallo, MSC, '*Buoni Cristiani*' e '*Buoni Cittadini*' *l'opera, la missione educativa e la pedagogia di Santa Francesca Cabrini* (MSC: Codogno, 2013).

¹³ Philip Gardner, *Hermeneutics, History and Memory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010).

hermeneutics, informing research into Catholic women religious in Italy since Vatican II.¹⁴ These hermeneutics are also helpful in understanding work by scholars outside of Italy. He provided a more detailed overview of the historiography of Catholic religious from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. De Giorgi identified Jesuit, Oratorian and Benedictine strands and made reference to the 'liberal school' of the nineteenth century. He also made reference to work of the Fascist period, particularly that of Gioacchino Volpe which idealised the missionaries, particularly Cabrini and her MSC, for assisting Italian migrants to maintain their culture and language.

Hermeneutic I is evident in the years following the publication of *Perfectae Caritas*, resulting in an epistemological rupture. Researchers moved from an inward focus on their congregation and founder, to look outward, as the Church focused on solidarity with human history. As De Giorgi, with reference to *Guadium et Spes*, put it:

To really produce history of religious institutes it was necessary to also study 'the joys and hopes, the sadness and anxieties of people'.¹⁵

Hermeneutic I informed work using spirituality as a methodological tool, particularly that considering the concrete realisation of the charism of a congregation in social history. Hellinckx et al. identified them as a resource largely unpublished and untapped by historians of education.¹⁶ On the whole these works were relegated to the margins of mainstream history. They are, however a valuable source for historians of education in

¹⁴ Fulvio De Giorgi, 'L'immagine dei Religiosi nella Storiografia Italiana Contemporanea', *Annali di Science Religiose*, 7(2002):323-339. <http://www.storicireligiosi.it/attifiles/3%20-%20De%20Giorgi.pdf> (accessed 30/10/2015).

¹⁵ De Giorgi, 'L'immagine', 6.

¹⁶ Bart Hellinckx et al., *The Forgotten Contribution of the Teaching Sisters*, 60. note12.

considering how the spiritual tradition of a congregation informed educational practice. Sister Maria Regina Canale's exploration of Cabrini's motto for the MSC: 'For the Glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus', (AMGSSCJ) is a good example.¹⁷ Canale was one of many female religious studying for higher degrees and producing theses on the history of their congregations. In 2011 Carmen Mangion and Laurence Lux-Sterritt developed this approach in their edited collection *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality*.¹⁸

De Giorgi identified the emergence of *Hermeneutic II* in the period between the Council and the end of the twentieth century.¹⁹ It was informed by a 'communitarian vision' and influenced by *Octogesima Adveniens*, an Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI.²⁰ It marked eighty years since the publication of Leo XIII's encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, in 1891. In it, Leo had set out Catholic Social Theory. This second hermeneutic informed work on Catholic presence in society, bringing together historians of Catholic religious and those working on broader social history. There was an emphasis on local studies and the history of religious institutes. Claude Langlois' 1984 seminal work, *Le Catholicisme au Féminin* demonstrates these features.²¹ His former student, Rebecca Rogers, has argued that it contributed to a revisionist historiography concerning the history of girls'

¹⁷ Canale, *La Gloria*.

¹⁸ Laurence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen M. Mangion, eds, *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

¹⁹ De Giorgi, 'Immagine', 7-9.

²⁰ *Octogesima Adveniens*, an Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI, On the Occasion of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Encyclical "Rerum Novarum" (May 14th, 1971).

²¹ Claude Langlois, *Le Catholicisme au Féminin. Les Congrégations Françaises à Supérieure Générale au XIX^e Siècle* (Éd. du Cerf, 1984).

education.²² This hermeneutic also impacted on history of education.

Work led by Luciano Pazzaglia on school and society was significant, including conferences, publications and a journal established in 1994 under Pazzaglia's editorship, *Annali di Storia dell'educazione e delle Istituzioni Educative*. In England, John Marmion's thesis on Cornelia Connelly's work in education is also representative of this period.²³

In 1994 Elizabeth Smyth observed that 'the research on the history of the teaching sisters is just beginning'.²⁴ This coincided with the emergence of De Giorgi's *Hermeneutic III*, which has informed the history of missions and missionary congregations, considered in the context of women's history.²⁵ De Giorgi saw this as having the possibility of bringing together the historiography of Catholic religious with non-denominational history as well as broader Catholic history. This has certainly been evident in the English speaking world.

Studies of Catholic teaching sisters have been published as articles in *History of Education* and *Paedagogica Historica*, with a special edition of the latter, edited by Rosa Bruno-Jofré, devoted to Catholic teaching congregations.²⁶ Papers on the subject are given at conferences including those of the History of Education Society, the International Standing Conference for the History of Education and the British Educational

²² Rebecca Rogers, 'Le Catholicisme au Féminin: Thirty Years of Women's History Claude Langlois's Vision of France: Regional Identity, Royal Imaginary and Holy Women', *Historical Reflections / Réflexions Historiques* 39, no. 1 (2013): 82-100.

²³ Marmion, 'Cornelia Connelly's Work in Education'.

²⁴ Elizabeth M Smyth, 'Much Exertion of the Voice and Great Application of the Mind' Teacher Education Within the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto, Canada 1851-1920,' Special joint double issue of the *History of Education Review* and *Historical Studies in Education* 3 (1994): 97-114.

²⁵ De Giorgi, 'Imagine', 9-11.

²⁶ Rosa Bruno-Jofré ed., *Catholic Teaching Congregations and Synthetic Configurations: Building Identity Through Pedagogy and Spirituality Across National Boundaries and Cultures*, *Paedagogica Historica* 49, Issue 4 (2013).

Research Association. Chapters on sisters' work have also been included in edited collections on women educators.²⁷ Rebecca Rogers' *From the Salon to the Schoolroom: Educating Girls in Nineteenth-Century France* has a chapter on 'the contribution of teaching nuns'.²⁸ Researchers of the history of women religious benefit from two networks: the Conference on the History of Women Religious (CHWR) based in the United States and the History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland (HWRBI), as well as the Cushwa Centre for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame.

Research on Catholic sisters, migration and the history of education has been slower to emerge. In 2009 Matteo Sanfilippo made the point that the role of women's congregations in Italian migration history 'is a chapter of history in need of in-depth exploration'.²⁹ He points out that the studies all agree that the role of Cabrini and the MSC was fundamental. That role was in education.

1 Literature on Catholic Educational Theorists

In considering the relationship between the Catholic religion and educational practice, theoretical literature exploring the philosophy of influential Catholic educational theorists of the past should provide a starting point. Five volumes of the 25 volume 'Continuum Library of Educational Thought' are devoted to Catholic educational theorists covering the period from the fourth to the twentieth century. Three are

²⁷ Tanya Fitzgerald and Elizabeth M Smyth eds., *Women Educators, Leaders and Activists: Educational Lives and Networks 1900-1960* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

²⁸ Rebecca Rogers, *From the Salon to the Schoolroom Educating Girls in Nineteenth-Century France* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

²⁹ Matteo Sanfilippo, 'Il Vaticano e l'emigrazione nelle Americhe' in *Per le Strade del Mondo*, ed. Stefania Bartoloni, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007), 347.

male religious: Augustine of Hippo (354-430), Thomas Aquinas (1225 or 1227-1284) and John Henry Newman (1801-1890). The authors consider how their writings are related to the Catholic faith.³⁰ Two volumes are on lay Catholics: Paulo Freire and Maria Montessori.³¹ With regard to Freire, Daniel Schugurensky refers to Catholicism as ‘a belief that would influence his future world view’ but does not explore how it informs his educational thought.³² In 2015 Cristóbal Madero addressed this gap in Freire's interpretation.³³ He demonstrated how two fundamental aspects of Freire’s educational theory derive from his experience of the Catholic faith tradition. The ‘theology of communion’ informed his concept of humanity and the theological virtues formed the basis for his concept of dialogue. Similarly, in her volume on Montessori, Marion O’Donnell does not explore the influence of Montessori’s Catholic faith.

In 2013, however, Peter Cunningham drew attention to the influence of Montessori’s Catholic faith on her work in a chapter in the *Practical Visionaries* collection.³⁴ In the same year *Montessori, Dio e il Bambino e Altri Scritti Inediti* was published.³⁵ Fulvio De Giorgi, the editor, provided a 95 page introduction, ‘Rileggere Maria Montessori’. In his re-reading De Giorgi brought into question the historiography which has placed

³⁰ James Arthur, *John Henry Newman* (2007); Vivan Boland OP, *St Thomas Aquinas* (2007); Ryan N. S. Topping (2010) *Augustine*, Continuum Library of Educational Thought, ed. (series) Richard Bailey (International: Continuum).

³¹ Marion O’Donnell, *Maria Montessori* (2007); Daniel Schugurensky, *Paulo Freire* (2011), Continuum Library of Educational Thought, ed. (series) Richard Bailey (International: Continuum).

³² Schugurensky, *Paulo Freire*, 12.

³³ Cristóbal Madero SJ, ‘Theological Dynamics of Paulo Freire's Educational Theory: An Essay to Assist the Work of Catholic Educators’, *International Studies in Catholic Education* 7, 2 (2015), 122-133.

³⁴ Peter Cunningham, ‘The Montessori Phenomenon: Gender and Internationalism in Early Twentieth Century Innovation’ in *Practical Visionaries*, eds. Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsh (Harlow: Pearson, 2013), 203-220.

³⁵ Fulvio De Giorgi ed., *Montessori, Dio e il Bambino e Altri Scritti Inediti* (Brescia: Editrice La Scuola, 2013).

Montessori in a secular, positivist tradition. De Giorgi quoted from her 1922 work on children in the Church where Montessori recalled how Spanish visitors had seen the Method as 'Catholic in its very substance'.³⁶ Father Casulleras, Father Frederic Clascar and Juan Palau Vera, the Spanish pedagogue, read her 1909 book on Method and visited Rome.³⁷ She had made no reference to Catholicism in the book but they identified Catholic features as follows:

The humility and patience of the teachers, deeds worth more than words, the sensory environment as the beginning of psychic life, the silence and recollection obtained from little children, the freedom to perfect itself left to the infant soul, the meticulous care in preventing and correcting everything that is bad or any simple error or small imperfections, the prevention of error itself with development materials and the respect for the interior life of the children shown with the cultivation of charity, were all principles of pedagogy which seemed to emanate from and be inspired by Catholicism.³⁸

Dio e il Bambino, previously published in Holland in 1939 and one of five of Montessori's works included in the collection, shows the relationship between faith and practice. A synthesis of faith and reason, it brings together her empirical research and her understanding of her Catholic faith with a particular focus on the incarnation. Developing her well known arguments regarding the potential ability of the young child she pointed to 'God the Son, who preferred to come into the world as a Child and to pass through all the phases of infant life'.³⁹ She argued that anyone who is disrespectful to a child is disrespectful to the Child Jesus.

³⁶ Ibid., 36.

³⁷ Ibid., 36.

³⁸ Maria Montessori, 'I Bambini Viventi nella Chiesa' in *Bambini Viventi nella Chiesa. La vita in Christo. La Santa Messa spiegata ai bambini*, ed., Ead., (Milano: Garzanti, 1970), 10. Cited in De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio*, 37.

³⁹ Maria Montessori, 'Dio e Il Bambino' in ed. De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio*, 145. The emphasis is in the original.

No literature looking at the relationship between the Catholic religion and Montessori practice in schools has been identified. O'Donnell observed that, 'Catholic nuns have been responsible for introducing Montessori education to many remote places in distant lands as well as teacher training'.⁴⁰ She gave no details. Sol Cohen in his 1974 article, 'The Montessori Movement in England, 1911–1952', did not include any sisters or convent schools amongst the educators and schools that adopted Montessori's Method.⁴¹ A recent discussion on the subject by members of the HWRBI via the listserve identified Montessori training schools established by sisters in London, Dublin and Glasgow as well as schools in Ireland and Nigeria in the inter-war period. As yet there has been no study of these schools.

The Montessori volume is one of only two in the continuum series on women. The other is on Mary Wollstonecraft.⁴² The educational theory of the philosopher Edith Stein (1891-1942), has received little attention in work on history of education. It has, however, been the subject of interest to philosophers of education in the United States, Spain and France.⁴³ The German phenomenologist studied under Edmund Husserl, preceding Martin Heidegger as his teaching assistant.⁴⁴ In *L'Art d'Eduquer Selon*

⁴⁰ Marion O'Donnell, *Maria Montessori* (London: Continuum, 2007), 81.

⁴¹ Sol Cohen, 'The Montessori Movement in England, 1911–1952', *History of Education* 3, no. 1 (1974): 51-67.

⁴² Susan Laird, *Mary Wollstonecraft* (London: Continuum, 2007).

⁴³ Mette Lebeche, 'Stein's Philosophy of Education in *The Structure of the Human Person*' in ed. Ian Leask, *Religion, Education and the Arts, Issue V: The Philosophy of Education* (2005): 55-70; Ignacio D González, 'Edith Stein: Una Visión Filosófica y Católica de la Educación', *Religión y Cultura*, LIII (2007): 463-498.

⁴⁴ An atheist from a Jewish family, Stein converted to Catholicism, taught in a school, teacher training college and the University of Munster. She gave conference papers and lectures on education, wrote philosophical and theological works and translated work by Newman and Aquinas. When the Aryan Law of the Nazis made it impossible for her to continue teaching in 1933 she entered a Carmelite convent. She died in 1942 in Auschwitz.

Edith Stein: Anthropologie, Éducation, Vie Spirituelle Eric De Rus showed how Stein used her background in philosophy, theology and education to develop an anthropology explaining a Catholic understanding of child-centred education. The work is divided into four parts which consider Stein's anthropology, the art of education as a holy office, the assumption of the whole person and prayer in educating. There is, however, no reference to how she put this into practice as a university tutor, lecturer at conferences and school teacher.

Stein was one of few Catholic educational theorists to write on education. In his work on Thomas Aquinas, Boland referred to the need to explore 'unexpected contexts or at least contexts that will at first seem strange to modern readers'.⁴⁵ In 1967 Rose Basile Greene used Cabrini's Travel Letters in a pamphlet of 28 pages on her educational philosophy.⁴⁶ Greene's work is a rare example of expressing the theoretical framework of a female religious propositionally and subjecting it to critical analysis. Greene explained that ideas from Cabrini's letters to her daughters 'germinated into a guiding and functional structure'.⁴⁷ She argued that Cabrini 'offers a tangible model' to address issues raised by the Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, in the 1943 Terry Lectures given at Yale.⁴⁸ In these, Maritain demonstrated that although the twentieth century was experiencing 'scientific improvement of the pedagogical means and methods', there was no 'parallel strengthening of practical wisdom and of

⁴⁵ Boland, *St Thomas*, 40.

⁴⁶ Rose Basile Greene, *The Cabrinian Philosophy of Education* (Pennsylvania: Cabrini College, 1967).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

the dynamic trend towards the goal'.⁴⁹ Greene summed up Cabrini's 'tangible model' in a formula:

Teacher Zeal → Pupil Interest → Adjustability → Flexibility⁵⁰

She also pointed out that those teachers wishing to apply this theoretical framework to classroom practice would need to follow Cabrini's example and 'have the magnanimity to adjust to the needs of the student'.⁵¹

The works of De Giorgi, De Ruz and Greene demonstrate how the Catholic faith has informed flexible, child-centred and relational educational theories. The implementation of these theories in Catholic educational establishments needs further exploration.

2 Literature on Catholic Educational Practice

The need for further research on the educational practice of Catholic teaching sisters was identified by Hellinckx et al., reflecting a general trend in the history of education, identified twenty years earlier by Harold Silver:

Experience — as best it can be identified — of those engaged in the process as teachers and learners, providers and provided-for, administrators and change agents, school people and educational people in general.⁵²

Although the literature remains limited, a number of scholars have produced studies of educational practice showing the influence of the Catholic religion.

⁴⁹ Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 3-4.

⁵⁰ Greene, *The Cabrinian Philosophy* 23.

⁵¹ Ibid., 23.

⁵² Harold Silver, 'Knowing and Not Knowing in the History of Education', *History of Education*, 21 No 1 (1992):197-108.

2.1 Traditions of Practice

Tom O'Donoghue has explored the process of Catholic education in the English-speaking world, in particular, Ireland and Australia. He identifies a number of educational traditions. In his 2001 work, *Upholding the Faith*, he focused on provision in Australian Catholic elementary schools for children of the working classes between 1922 and 1965.⁵³ He showed that both the intellectual and mystical elements of religion were absent and found evidence of a rigid institutional element. He argued that the provision was part of an anti-intellectual tradition and 'bore little of the hallmarks of some of those older pedagogical traditions within the Church'.⁵⁴ It was in marked contrast to the provision in secondary schools where O'Donoghue argued the 'more enlightened' practice of, for example, the Jesuits, Loreto Sisters and Society of the Sacred Heart was experienced only by an elite minority and the membership of those congregations accounted for only a very small proportion of the religious who taught in Australian Catholic schools of the period.

He described the rigid, authoritarian nature of the educational practice experienced by the majority of Catholic children. This included an inflexible approach, humiliating punishments and aggression from teachers. He found no evidence of the gentleness of Saint Francis of Assisi or the Ursuline focus on the child's interests.⁵⁵ He linked this with the Catholicism experienced by the religious. For example, he argued that the lack of any dialogical classroom practice stemmed from congregational Rules which 'operated to subdue any notion that education might be

⁵³ Tom O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922-1965* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001).

⁵⁴ Ibid., 61.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 62.

about fostering interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils'.⁵⁶ This appeared 'to have grown out of the notion that spirituality could only be built up by laying aside one's sensitivity and need for love and affection'.⁵⁷ These relationships continued to dominate even when more innovative classroom techniques were used.

O'Donoghue looked to Church organisation, spiritual traditions and national culture to explain the Australian experience of Catholic education. He argued that the increased centralisation of the Catholic Church between 1922 and 1965 resulted in a more controlling approach from Rome. This was reflected in the local churches. O'Donoghue also identified the influence of a harsh spiritual tradition in keeping with Jansenism, but possibly a result of a tradition of Rigorism in the Irish Church.⁵⁸ Congregations based in Ireland sent Irish members to Australia in large numbers resulting in a strong Irish influence in Australian Catholic education. This harsh tradition impacted on pupil-teacher relationships. O'Donoghue also used the theology of Josef Jungman SJ (1889-1975), in his analysis.⁵⁹ Jungman identified an emphasis on doctrine and formulae as ends in themselves, rather than means. There was also a separation of morality and spirituality in Catholic education. This is in keeping with Pickaers' concept of a 'morality of obligation'. Jungman contrasts this approach with another which centres on the person of Christ.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁸ O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith*, 133.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 79

Donald Cave and Jennie Collins have explored older intellectual traditions of Catholic education to which O'Donoghue referred. Their studies focused on the embodiment of a tradition in teachers. Mark Jordan has drawn attention to this approach in his 2017 *Teaching Bodies*, which proposes a re-reading of the *Summa Theologiae* of St Thomas Aquinas.⁶⁰ Jordan argues that Aquinas taught morals by drawing attention to God's way of teaching: through embodied scenes. Donald Cave, in his 1985 article, 'The Pedagogical Traditions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart in France and Australia', considered how Mère Amélie Salmon RSCJ (1849-1939) embodied the French pedagogical traditions of the Society of the Sacred Heart.⁶¹ Salmon, a French alumna of the congregation, served as *Mère Vicaire* in Australia from 1885-1936, overseeing the work of the society's schools and establishing universities in Tokyo and Sydney. Madeleine Sophie Barat (1779-1865), the Society's foundress, was the sister of a member of the Society of Jesus. This was very influential in the sisters' educational practice. Cave explored the curriculum and timetable in detail using the Society's plans of study, based on the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits. It was monitored and developed by the curriculum committee in Rome and the local Mistress of Studies. Reports and letters from convents to the Mother House in Rome were part of monitoring. He showed the emphasis on intellectual development for those girls who had completed the general education of 'Grammar, Arithmetic, History, Geography and Cosmography'.⁶² This '*Classe Supérieure*' would study

⁶⁰ Mark D Jordan, *Teaching Bodies: Moral Formation in the Summa of Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017).

⁶¹ Donald Cave, 'The Pedagogical Traditions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart in France and Australia' in *Melbourne Studies in Education*, ed., Imelda Palmer (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1985), 28-73.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 55.

philosophy. They covered the set texts of Christian philosophy, as well as some Plato and Descartes. They would also study 'contemporary history', the classics of French literature, 'Elements of Physics and Chemistry applied to industry', 'some archaeology, geology and botany', 'legal affairs' and 'rules of practical hygiene and domestic economy'. The timetable in Australia conformed to the model of the Society.⁶³

The curriculum had 'the thorough teaching of Christian doctrine as its foundation'.⁶⁴ Mère Salmon's classroom practice brought together the intellectual and spiritual aspects of education and 'no matter what the subject was, it led naturally to God'.⁶⁵ Her obituary gave an example:

As Mistress of Studies while present at an arithmetic class, she made use of the subject of the divisibility of numbers to speak to us of her favourite theme, humility: the infinitely great and the infinitely small, providing us with paper, which she tore up, the nothingness of our littleness and our annihilation before God.⁶⁶

She adapted methods to individual needs and generated enthusiasm for her subject. Cave also addressed the issue of the 'Frenchness' of the educational practice as Mère Salmon wished to 'mould everything to the French ideal'. The materiality of schooling was important and decorations and artefacts were sent to houses in Australia from the French houses.⁶⁷ Talented French teaching sisters, no longer able to work in France as a result of the 1903 Combes Law, joined the staff in Rose Bay School and continued the French

⁶³ Ibid., 57.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 62.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 58.

influence. Cave argued, however, that the pedagogical traditions of the Society of the Sacred Heart appear to have been informed by Jansenism.⁶⁸ This seems surprising, for, as explained earlier, devotion to the Sacred Heart was condemned by the Jansenists. He pointed out that both Barat and Mère Salmon were brought up in households where the spiritual climate was influenced by Jansenism. He identified this in relation to the central monitoring and constraints on the sisters rather than through a focus on school practice.

Jenny Collins looked at the embodiment of congregational tradition in her article, 'Of Sheep's pluck and science exhibitions: the professional life of Mother Bernard Towers RSM'.⁶⁹ Mother Bernard was an alumna of the Mercy Sisters. She went on to teach science for sixty years in Mercy schools in New Zealand. She worked at her alma mater, St Mary's College, Auckland for almost fifty years. She was the Principal from 1933-43 and continued as a classroom teacher afterwards. Collins showed how Mother Bernard established 'a culture of science' in a girls' school.⁷⁰ She was involved in curricular development, establishing Home Science and then the new General Science curriculum after the Second World War. Everyday practice evolved from observation to a more 'hands on' approach, with pupils conducting experiments. From the 1950s some students progressed to study science at university. Mother Bernard entered her pupils for science competitions and Collins included a photograph of Mother Bernard, aged 77, with a group of students who won a prize. Collins also explored Mother Bernard's role in the training of

⁶⁸ Ibid., 40.

⁶⁹ Jenny Collins, 'Of Sheep's pluck and science exhibitions: the professional life of Mother Bernard Towers RSM' (1883-1963) *History of Education* 38 no.5 (2009): 649-666.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 664.

science teachers. She acted as a mentor to new teachers, arranged attendance at university courses, input by a local Marist brother, with a Masters in science, and from a Mercy sister, who was a trained nurse. The sisters also participated in a Board of Education programme 'roaming the countryside' on field trips and visiting industry.⁷¹ Creating the 'culture of science' included building teaching facilities. Collins also explored the materiality of pupils' experience. She made some reference to devotional practice but did not directly refer to the philosophy or spirituality informing Mother Bernard's practice. The language of the quotes, however, conveys kindness, simplicity and joy. Hilary Minns, in her article on the Mercy foundress, Catherine MacAuley identified these qualities as important to teaching in the Mercy tradition.⁷²

Both Cave and Collins showed the important role played by alumnae in maintaining the lived tradition of educational institutions, a point also emphasised by Brian Simon in relation to public schools.⁷³ Both authors emphasised the strong intellectual traditions of the teaching sisters. Jane Kelly's work on the establishment of the Loreto congregation in Australia also highlights an intellectual tradition.⁷⁴ Cave also identified opportunities for girls to develop the intellectual element of religion, referred to by Von Hugel. There is little direct reference to how the Catholic faith informed this intellectual focus in the education of women and girls or of the

⁷¹ Ibid., 660.

⁷² Hilary Minns, 'Catherine McAuley and the Education of Irish Roman Catholic Children in the Mid-Nineteenth Century' in *Practical Visionaries: Women, Education and Social Progress 1790-1930*, eds. Mary Hilton and Pam Hirsch (Harlow: Pearson, 2000), 52-65.

⁷³ Simon, 'Why no pedagogy', 34.

⁷⁴ Jane Kelly, 'Loreto Education in Australia: The Pioneering Influence of Mother Gonzaga Barry' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth (London: Routledge, 2016), 199-214.

development of the mystical element of religion and a personal relationship with God.

This mystical element of religion is addressed in Carmen Mangion's 2008 book, *Contested Identities*, a prosopographical analysis of ten congregations within the socio-religious context of England and Wales in the nineteenth century. Mangion demonstrated the importance of the sisters' spiritual lives to their active roles showing that for them religion was 'an empowering belief system'.⁷⁵ Some contemporaries had difficulty reconciling the sisters' spirituality with their modern work in the world, viewing them in a purely utilitarian way.

Other scholars have considered sisters' embodiment of leadership and entrepreneurial qualities. In *New Women of the Old Faith* Kathleen Sprows Cummings has shown that in the United States until the 1960s women found more opportunities for education and leadership within the Catholic Church than outside it.⁷⁶ Sister Julia McGroarty SND, founder of Trinity College in Washington, D.C., and subject of a chapter in the book, is a good example. She set up the first purpose built Catholic college of higher education for women in 1900. She purchased the land, designed the buildings, recruited the students, trained the faculty and raised the funds.⁷⁷ Catriona Delaney looked at the accounts of the Irish Presentation Sisters in her 2017 doctoral thesis, demonstrating their expertise in the

⁷⁵ Carmen M Mangion, *Contested Identities: Catholic Women religious in nineteenth century England and Wales* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2008), 9.

⁷⁶ Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *New Women of the Old Faith* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

financial management of their schools.⁷⁸ Deidre Raftery's and my work have shown how sisters used networks to mobilise their educational practice transnationally.⁷⁹ Robert Sirico has provided a good example of how these qualities can be considered in relation to the religious faith of the sisters. He showed how Cabrini embodied the virtues of the entrepreneur, using them in a way informed by scripture and how her understanding of the economy differed from that of both capitalists and socialists. She saw it as an 'ever-changing wellspring from which humanitarian concerns can draw in order to achieve high ideals'.⁸⁰ In a similar vein in 2011 O'Donoghue and Chapman showed how teacher identity can be informed by discourses of 'vocation' and 'service' as much as by those of 'industrial' and 'labour'.⁸¹ Flora Derounian, in her work on Italian Catholic Women religious as workers, has shown how they have not been perceived as part of the workforce.⁸²

⁷⁸ Catriona Delaney, 'The Presentation order and the transformation of the Irish denominational secondary school, 1940-72' (PhD Thesis, University of Limerick, 2016).

⁷⁹ Deirdre Raftery, 'Teaching Sisters And Transnational Networks: Recruitment and Education Expansion in the Long Nineteenth Century', *History of Education* 44, no.6 (2015): 717-728; Maria P Williams, 'Mobilising Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice: the Transnational Context of the London School of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus 1898-1911', *History of Education* 44, no.5 (2015): 631-650.

⁸⁰ Robert Sirico, 'An Enterprising Saint' in *A Continuing Story, 125 years of the Institute of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, ed. MSC (Milan: MSC, 2005), 185-6.

⁸¹ Tom O' Donoghue and Anne Chapman, 'A social Semiotic Analysis of the Discursive Construction Of Teacher Identity in the "Book of Rules and Customs" of the Australian Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus', *History of Education* 40, no. 3 (2011): 91-407.

⁸² Flora Derounian, '[How Nuns Changed the Workforce](http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170908-the-extraordinary-undervalued-work-of-nuns)', *The Conversation*, <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170908-the-extraordinary-undervalued-work-of-nuns> (accessed 09/07/18).

2.2 Institutional Histories

There has been a growing interest in institutional histories recently.⁸³

These can provide opportunities to consider the relationship between a tradition and practice in the context of the establishment and development of an institution. Anne Collignon's current research on the Copenhagen International School 1964-2017, for example, looks at how values are formed and contribute to the tradition and ideology of an international school.⁸⁴ The relationship between the educational tradition of a Catholic congregation and the practicalities of establishing and maintaining Catholic educational institutions has been explored by Rosa Bruno-Jofré and Maurice Whitehead. Both set their studies within a transnational context.

In a 2016 article Bruno-Jofré looked at the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, a congregation founded in France in 1861. She looked at three schools established in Canada between 1898 and 1899 to provide for migrant and aboriginal pupils.⁸⁵ The foundress of the Congregation was Euphrasie Barbier, who:

advocated child-centred education, proper teacher training and an integrated formative education. The latter related spiritual, academic and practical aspects, none to the detriment of the other.⁸⁶

Bruno-Jofré quoted from a letter to show that Barbier wanted teachers to use the beauty of the Catholic faith. She advised them to 'make virtue

⁸³ For example, 'Writing Institutional History', ICHRE termly symposium, 12th December 2017.

⁸⁴ Anne Collignon, 'Empowering a School by Its History? The case of Copenhagen International School (1964-2017)', 'Writing Institutional History', ICHRE.

⁸⁵ Rosa Bruno-Jofré, 'The Situational Dimension of the educational apostolate and the configuration of the Learner as a Cultural and Political Object' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth (London: Routledge, 2016), 160-182.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

attractive’ and understand ‘fear of God, a fear which comes from love’.⁸⁷ In Canada, the sisters were influenced by the clergy, the hierarchy and the local situation. Bruno- Jofré used J L Austin’s concept of ‘illocutionary force’, or the intended force of linguistic action, developed by Quentin Skinner, in analysing her data. She showed that the illocutionary force sustaining the sisters’ work was ‘salvation of souls’ and ‘the keeping or re-creation of Catholic order’ in the new setting. In the two schools for Catholic migrant pupils, the illocutionary force had a positive impact. The sisters’ bilingual approach empowered the migrants in their struggles. Bruno-Jofré pointed out, however, that ‘the concept of child-centred education if de-contextualised becomes hollow’.⁸⁸ This occurred in the school for Aboriginal pupils. It contributed to their colonization through the imposition of institutional religion. The school was in a mission under the direction of missionary priests so the sisters left. The use of three cases is helpful in evaluating the coherence of a founder’s ideas and the practice by sisters in different countries. More in-depth studies of this kind would contribute significantly to the field.

In his transnational study, *English Jesuit Education: Expulsion, Suppression, Survival and Restoration, 1762–1803*, Maurice Whitehead adopted a new approach to institutional history, exploring curriculum, spirituality and leadership to demonstrate the evolution of an educational tradition informed by the Catholic faith.⁸⁹ This tradition was established by the Jesuit founder, St Ignatius Loyola, in the mid- sixteenth century. The

⁸⁷ Ibid., 163.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 170.

⁸⁹ Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education: Expulsion, Suppression, Survival and Restoration, 1762–1803*. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

Institution which provides the focus of the book is the Jesuit school established following the outlawing of Catholic education in England during the Reformation. Established in St Omer in 1593 it was forced to move to Bruges, then Liege and back to England to Stonyhurst in 1803. The rectors were all English. Initially the students were English male educational migrants. By 1790 it was an international school with students from the United States, the Caribbean, the Low Countries, France and Spain as well as England and Ireland. They joined from the age of 14. Between 1773 and 1814, the years of the suppression of the Jesuits by the papacy, the school was staffed by ex-Jesuits. The study provides a detailed analysis of the implementation of the curriculum within the transnational context of political, social and cultural change. The basis was the *Ratio Studiorum* or Plan of Studies, first issued in 1599. Designed by practising educators and based on Christian humanism, it was 'at the forefront of educational thought and pedagogical practice'.⁹⁰ There was an emphasis on 'the coherent practical application of theory', resulting in 'the publication of substantial supporting literature of educational treatises from Jesuits across the world'.⁹¹ The curriculum in St Omer and Bruges adhered closely to the ratio with an emphasis on Latin language and literature. It allowed time for private study and for a contest on subject matter with a class divided into two sides. A 'demanding daily *ordo*' set out student activities from 5.00 am to 9.00pm. These did, however, include two half days on Tuesday and Thursday and many extra-curricular activities. These were not included in the *ratio*. With the establishment of boarding schools, there was time for music, drama, sporting activities and

⁹⁰ Ibid., 127.

⁹¹ Ibid., 15.

debating. Donations of country houses provided facilities for sport and recreation.

Whilst showing the flexibility of the Jesuit system, Whitehead also identified problems from about 1700, when it 'became gradually more fossilized and increasingly irrelevant to new educational needs.'⁹² The provision for those over 18 at Watten and Liege was not so restricted. As the school became established in Liege, however, the education became more progressive than that of the major English public schools. It was on a par with Warrington Academy, described by Ruth Watts as the 'flagship of dissenting education'.⁹³ Science, vernacular languages and geography as well as book keeping were introduced at the school, by then known as The English Academy. New text books were produced and extensive libraries were established for staff and students. The freedom provided by the suppression of the Jesuits, the agency of ex-Jesuits John Howard (1718-1783), Rector in the period 1773-83 and of his successor William Strickland (1731-1819), Rector from 1784 to 1790 and the support of the local bishop were significant factors in these developments. Another was the establishment of Liege as an all age school allowing the:

primary and secondary level classical traditions of St Omer, Watten and Bruges to intermingle with the tertiary level scientific and philosophical traditions of Liege.⁹⁴

Whitehead also researched the influence of the progressive local convent of the Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre. Howard had served as chaplain there prior to his appointment as Rector. The Prioress, Mary Christina Dennett (1730-1781), had been born in the same part of Lancashire as

⁹² Ibid., 37.

⁹³ Ruth Watts, 'Joseph Priestley (1733-1804)', *Prospects: the quarterly review of comparative education*, 24 (1994): 33.

⁹⁴ Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education*, 127.

Howard. Both had an 'unwavering commitment to personal spiritual development'.⁹⁵ In the book Whitehead shows that a mystical experience, which the Prioress referred to as 'an intellectual experience of the Sacred Heart of Jesus' led her to undertake the establishment of a school with a forward looking curriculum with subjects listed as:

scripture, English, French and Italian, double-entry book-keeping, domestic account keeping, styles of letter writing for all walks of life, differences in weights and measures in different countries, Heraldry, Geography, Use of Globes and Sphere, the principles of Natural History, embroidery, needlework, drawing and the painting of flowers.⁹⁶

From the outset, serving the common good was central to Jesuit education together with a belief that ethical and religious formation 'should infuse the educational experience whether clerical or lay'.⁹⁷ Whitehead's book shows the link between the devotional life and community building. Sodalities played an important role in bringing together spirituality and morality. As well as prayers and other devotional activities the students developed organisational and leadership skills, as officers of the sodality were given freedom to hold their student council meetings without staff present. These were usually once a fortnight and 'means to inspire other students with higher ideals' were discussed. Members of the sodality were expected 'to unite in giving good example in prayer, conduct and study'.⁹⁸ Whitehead's exploration of the English Jesuit tradition of Catholic education considers the institutional, intellectual and mystical aspects of religion. It also shows new applications of founding principles to meet the needs of the time, producing a convincing argument regarding the contribution of this educational

⁹⁵ Ibid., 129.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 129.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 13.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 145.

practice to the Catholic Enlightenment of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Europe and its continuity from 1593 to the present.

Another innovative contribution to the field was made by Ciaran O'Neill, with *'Catholics of Consequence'*, a prosographical study of Irish elite pupils in the period 1850-1900.⁹⁹ The group were part of a 'much wider transnational phenomenon of strategic educational migration' in the period 1850-1900.¹⁰⁰ Their stories are in marked contrast with those found in the large body of diasporic history on poor economic migrants. Most chapters are devoted to the education of boys in English Catholic schools, including the Jesuit Stonyhurst and Beaumont, the Benedictine Downside and the diocesan Oscott and Ushaw. As well as strong intellectual traditions, these schools also had a strong tradition of 'extras', including, sports teams, theatre, debating societies and sodalities. At both Stonyhurst and Beaumont the Sodality of Our Lady, thrived with up to 25 members and a private chapel at Stonyhurst. O'Neill, like Whitehead, identified the link between the devotional and social lives of sodalists. Spirituality and morality went hand-in-hand and members were 'expected to provide exemplary conduct for their peers'.¹⁰¹ Honouring the Blessed Virgin Mary included imitating her virtues.

One chapter is devoted to 'Ireland's Place in European-Wide Embourgeoisement of Female Education in the Nineteenth Century'.¹⁰² Many Irish girls from elite families were sent to convent schools in France and England. French influence was also significant in Ireland. Many Irish

⁹⁹ Ciaran O'Neill, *Catholics of Consequence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 107.

¹⁰² Ibid., 189.

teaching congregations were founded in France, for example the Faithful Companions of Jesus and the Society of the Sacred Heart. O'Neill uncovered sources giving the pupils voice. These indicate that the control of behaviour and surveillance culture of a Sacred Heart convent in Paris was 'read as both a positive and negative feature of convent education'.¹⁰³ This was in marked contrast to the approach at Holy Child Convent at St Leonard's-on-sea in England attended by a number of Irish girls.

O'Neill attributed this more progressive tradition to the American founder Cornelia Connelly:

This more modern character put it in line with the leading Protestant schools which was perhaps to be expected of an American convert with an Episcopalian background.¹⁰⁴

John Marmion, however, in his work on Connelly and education emphasises the influence of her stays in Italy.¹⁰⁵ These works of Whitehead and O'Neill support O'Donoghue's argument regarding an intellectual tradition of Catholic education for wealthier pupils. It would be very useful to have work which compared practice of congregations with richer and poorer pupils.

2.3 Invisible Pedagogy

In his 2002 work, *Catholic Schools, Mission, Markets and Morality*, Gerald Grace identified the significance of Bernstein's 'invisible pedagogy' in Catholic educational practice.¹⁰⁶ Embodiment of ideals

¹⁰³ Ibid., 185.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 176.

¹⁰⁵ John Marmion, 'Cornelia Connelly's Work In Education'.

¹⁰⁶ Gerald Grace, *Catholic Schools, Mission, Markets and Morality*. (London: Routledge Falmer, 2002), 49-51.

in images plays an important part in this. Christine Trimingham Jack has explored the embodiment of a congregation's spiritual ideals in the materiality of schooling, using an approach informed by feminist, post-structuralist theory.¹⁰⁷ In her 1998 article she focused on three religious symbols, the Sacred Heart, Madeleine Sophie Barat and the *Mater Admirabilis* displayed in a picture in Kerever Park, a small preparatory boarding school of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart in rural Australia. She considered the symbols in the context of the writings of the foundress Madeleine Sophie Barat in the early nineteenth century and those of the General Superior, Janet Erskine Smith, in the early twentieth century. She found 'two discourses of love expressed by sacrifice and suffering and the mysterious and ineffable love of God'. These were in 'metaphoric tension with each other'. Barat's earlier focus on the love of God was replaced by a predominance of sacrifice and suffering in the work of Erskine. They may indicate two different traditions of educational practice by the Society. There is one reference to the impact on a pupil. More accounts from teachers and pupils are needed to assess the impact of the images. In 2004 Tom O'Donoghue and Anthony Potts pointed to the need of further work of this kind.¹⁰⁸ Claude Langlois' exploration of the connection between the name of a congregation and contemporary religious devotions provides insights.¹⁰⁹ In the case of Cabrini's MSC, Maria Regina Canale's work on Cabrini's relationship with the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the spirituality of the MSC would

¹⁰⁷ Christine Trimingham Jack, 'Sacred Symbols, School Ideology and the Construction of Subjectivity', *Paedagogica Historica* 34, no 3(1998): 771-794.

¹⁰⁸ Tom O'Donoghue & Anthony Potts, 'Researching the Lives of Catholic Teachers who were members of Religious Orders: Historiographical Considerations', *History of Education* 33, no.4 (2004): 469-481.

¹⁰⁹ 'Le Choix d'un nom', *Le Catholicisme au Feminin*, 175-202.

provide a basis for consideration of symbols displayed in MSC schools.¹¹⁰

2.4 Education and Formation of Teachers

Catholic educational practice in the education and formation of teachers remains an under-researched field. In his 2012 article, 'Teacher Education as a Field of Historical Research: Retrospect and Prospect', David Crook concluded that teacher education was under-researched and under-represented in the journal, *History of Education*.¹¹¹ With a few notable exceptions, works published on the subject did not reflect the increasingly international themes of the journal and the bases of contributing authors. Crook made no reference to publications on Catholic women religious, although he explored the emerging body of work on women and teacher education. This included a number of works by Kay Whitehead, who has demonstrated the importance of teacher education in the transition from a tradition of philanthropy to one of professionalism in education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, in her chapter on Lillian de Lyssa, in the collection, *Life Stories: Exploring Issues in Educational History through Biography*. Whitehead used a life history of teacher educator de Lyssa, who trained kindergarten teachers in Australia and served as Principal of Gypsy Hill Training College in London. De Lyssa exemplified the transition because:

Her initial reason was located in the tradition of British middle class women's philanthropy but she re-positioned herself as a modern

¹¹⁰ Canale, *La Gloria*.

¹¹¹ David Crook, 'Teacher Education as a Field of Historical Research: Retrospect and Prospect', *History of Education* 41, no.1 (2012): 57-72.

progressive social reformer and 'kindergartener' by which she meant kindergarten teacher.¹¹²

This transition is also evident in literature showing how Catholic teaching sisters embraced professional teacher training, gaining qualifications themselves and providing high quality training for women teachers. This includes the work of Giancarlo Rocca on Italy, Rebecca Rogers on France, Kim Lowden on England and Margaret Thompson on the United States and Jane Kelly on Australia.¹¹³ In her chapter 'Women Religious and Teacher Education: A Case Study of the Sisters of Notre Dame in the Nineteenth Century' published in 2000, Kim Lowden used a comparative approach to study the 'class, gendered and religious' nature of Our Lady's Liverpool, the first Catholic training college for women established by the Sisters of Notre Dame and attended by sisters and lay women.¹¹⁴ She gave insights into the high standard of teacher education. Like de Lyssa, the sisters mobilised practice transnationally and were supported by a transnational network of women. Lowden did not, however, relate the educational provision to the Marian spiritual tradition of the congregation.

The issue of formation of character has been a particular feature of literature on Catholic women religious. Jenny Collins has pointed out that the initial formation of a sister 'was seen as an important part of her

¹¹² Kay Whitehead, 'Contextualising and Contesting National Identities' in *Life Stories: Exploring Issues in Educational History through Biography*, ed. Linda C. Morice, Laurel Puchner (Charlotte: Information Age, 2014), 236.

¹¹³ Giancarlo Rocca, 'La formazione delle religiose insegnanti'; Rebecca Rogers, *From the Salon to the Schoolroom*; Kim Lowden, 'Women Religious and Teacher Education: A Case Study of the Sisters of Notre Dame in the Nineteenth Century', in *Commitment to Diversity in a Changing World* eds. Mary Eaton, Jane Longmore, and Arthur Naylor (London: Cassell, 2000), 67-93; Margaret Susan Thompson, 'Adaptation and Professionalisation: Challenges for Teaching Sisters in a Pluralistic Nineteenth-Century America', *Paedagogica Historica* 49, no. 4 (2013) : 454-70; Jane Kelly, 'Loreto Education in Australia: The Pioneering Influence of Mother Gonzaga Barry' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth (London: Routledge, 2016), 199-214.

¹¹⁴ Kim Lowden, 'Women Religious and Teacher Education', 67-93.

teacher training.’¹¹⁵ A number of works focus on education and formation of religious by foundresses. They address the mystical element of religion; show the link between spirituality and morality and the impact of a personal relationship with God. Edith Stein explored intellectual understanding and accompaniment in character formation. Kate Stogdon has given a new interpretation to the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola.

In her 1935 work, *L'Art d'Eduquer: Regard sur Thérèse d'Avila*, Edith Stein explored Catholic educational practice through the work of the reformer, Saint Teresa of Avila (1515- 1582). Teresa sought to establish a new lived tradition.¹¹⁶ Stein showed how Teresa brought together the institutional, intellectual and mystical elements in educating sisters and friars. Stein, in the German tradition, distinguished between ‘teaching’ and ‘education’ defining teaching as ‘transmitting information to a mind’ or ‘the exercise through which a capacity is transformed into an aptitude.’ With education, however, ‘the will is directed towards a goal’.¹¹⁷ She used ‘education’ where ‘formation’ is often used by other authors. Stein explained that Teresa was clear about her goal, to educate religious to live the original 1200 rule of Albert of Jerusalem, ‘to contemplate day and night the law of the Lord’.¹¹⁸ Teresa ‘carried an ideal of life in her heart’ which had not been trialled. She needed to form a ‘type of person who would incarnate

¹¹⁵ Jenny Collins, ‘Have Your Children Got Leave to Speak?’ in *Education Identity and Women Religious 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth (London: Routledge, 2016) 123.

¹¹⁶ Teresa, also known by her name in religion, Teresa de Jesus, established 17 reformed Carmelite convents and worked with Saint John of the Cross to reform the Carmelite friars. Their foundations were to become the Discalced Carmelite Order.

¹¹⁷ Edith Stein, *L'Art d'Eduquer: Regard sur Thérèse d'Avila* (Geneva: Ad Solem, 1999), 48.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

this ideal'.¹¹⁹ This ideal had emerged when Teresa had come to realise the meaning of 'interior dialogue of the soul with God'.¹²⁰ This required more than the institutional element of religion. An important feature of Teresa's educational practice was the description of this 'type'. She wanted her sons and daughters to understand the goal of living the Rule of prayer and work. To illustrate this, Stein used a four page extract from Teresa's *Book of Foundations* which documented the establishment of the houses she founded.¹²¹ She also referred to Teresa's works on her own journey in the contemplative life, particularly *The Interior Castle*, which sets out the way in seven steps. A 'simple holy joy' was central to her practice of formation.¹²²

Stein also showed how Teresa understood formation as a practice which involved prayer to obtain the necessary graces and guidance from the Holy Spirit. Teresa's personal relationship with God was shown to be central and her relationships with her students mirrored this relationship. She formed Anne of Jesus to become her successor through a process of accompaniment, by having her live and work alongside her. Stein, with reference to the Old Testament, described the way that Teresa 'impregnated Anne with her spirit' as Elijah had done with Elisha.

Annual participation in the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola played an important part in ongoing education and formation of Catholic women religious in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In her contribution to the *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality* collection, Kate

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 65-69.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 85.

Stogdon gave a new interpretation of them. She used the work and writings of Saint Thérèse Couderc (1805-1885), co-founder of the Congregation of Our Lady of the Retreat in the Cenacle in Lalouvesc, France in 1827.¹²³ These sisters were the first women in France to give spiritual retreats to female pilgrims, using the Ignatian method. The exercises are a series of meditations on the life of Christ, together with rules to assist the retreatant to conquer her passions and develop positive emotions to enable her to give herself to God. In terms of professional preparation, Couderc insisted that sisters who were to give the Exercises have an intellectual understanding of the exercises.

Stogdon used a study of Couderc's writings to bring into question a common interpretation of the Exercises, exemplified in the work of Paula Kane. Kane sees them as 'a socially constructed ideal of extreme suffering as the true expression of the feminine' imposed on women.¹²⁴ Rather than a mystical experience, Kane sees the Exercises as the imposition of institutional religious control. Relating structure and agency, Stogdon used Couderc's writing to show that her reflection gave her an understanding of 'self-surrender' which differed from that of self-abnegation. It was rather 'a passionate following of the heart's desire'.¹²⁵ This resulted from her loving relationship with God. She described 'Couderc challenging her sisters to the disposition of spiritual freedom'.¹²⁶ A key text was entitled *Se Livrer*, which might be translated as 'To Free Oneself'.

¹²³ Kate Stogdon, 'Expressions of Self-Surrender in Nineteenth Century France: The case of Thérèse Couderc' in *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality*, ed. Lux-Sterritt and Mangion, 149-164.

¹²⁴ Paula M Kane, 'She Offered Herself Up: The Victim Souls and Victim Spirituality in Catholicism', *Church History* 71 (2002):84-5.

¹²⁵ Kate Stogdon, 'Expressions of Self-Surrender', 149.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

Stein and Stogdon focused on the reflexivity of the women within the structures of their time and their resulting agency in finding new approaches to Catholic formation. Similarly Quericiolo Mazzonis' work on Angela Merici and the Ursulines explored the establishment of 'a dynamic relationship of adoption, rejection and innovation of medieval and renaissance attitudes towards women', in the context of mystic and penitential spirituality.¹²⁷ The authors worked closely with the original writings of these foundresses to identify their original intentions. Consideration of the mystical element of religion is central to their expositions. They did not, however, show the impact of formation on the lived tradition of educational practice in schools.

In 1996 Lucetta Scaraffia made an unusual contribution to the field of formation of religious with *Il Concilio in Convento*.¹²⁸ It deals with the 'crisis of the Cabrini Institute' in the mid-twentieth century. Scaraffia explores the development of the lived tradition of the MSC from Cabrini's innovative 1881 Rule and founding to the difficulties of the 1960s. The 'crisis' to be addressed was the need for renewal brought about by what Scaraffia referred to as the 'knot of obedience'. She argued that this resulted from a desire to continue to live the MSC tradition in the same way as during Cabrini's life. By the mid-twentieth century, however, some parts of the lived tradition had become the kind of outmoded traditions or customs, highlighted by Yves Congar, in his work on tradition.¹²⁹ They restricted rather than maintained the MSC tradition.

¹²⁷ Quericiolo Mazzonis, 'The Impact of Renaissance gender-related notions on the female experience of the sacred: The Case of Angela Merici's Ursulines' in *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality*, ed. Lux-Sterritt and Mangion, 51-67.

¹²⁸ Lucetta Scaraffia, *Il Concilio in Convento*. (Brescia: Editrice Morcelliana, 1996).

¹²⁹ Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*.

The crisis culminated in the Congregation of Religious of the Holy See appointing an investigator, Father Molinari SJ, to visit the Institute in 1966. Whilst the impact on the formation of sisters is evident, there is no reference to consequences for education in schools.

Margaret Thompson's 2016 article 'Sisters and the Creation of American Catholic Identities' is a major contribution, focusing on the complexities of the topic in relation to formation of migrant sisters from a number of European countries in the United States.¹³⁰ She showed that some had an understanding of pluralism which was outside of the dominant view of their time. She did not relate this to Catholic beliefs. In, *Mother Cabrini "Italian Immigrant of the Century"* Mary Louise Sullivan argues that Cabrini had this understanding too. She relates it to Sacred Heart Spirituality.¹³¹

A range of approaches to the education and formation of religious is evident in the works considered. They indicate the impact of national traditions in their national and transnational contexts, in different places and historical periods. Moves away from an original lived tradition, established by the foundress, have also been shown. This was due to a wish to conserve old customs and traditions, rather than find new applications of the tradition to meet the needs of the time. There is a need for further research on how the approach of foundresses to education and formation of sisters impacted on educational practice in schools. It has not been possible to identify work on the education and

¹³⁰ Margaret Susan Thompson, 'Adaptation and Professionalisation: challenges for teaching sisters in a pluralistic nineteenth-century America', *Paedagogica Historica*, 49, no. 4 (2013): 454-70.

¹³¹ Mary Louise Sullivan MSC, *Mother Cabrini "Italian Immigrant of the Century"*. (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1992).

formation programmes for students in the residences for female students at secular universities established by women religious including the MSC and the Loreto Sisters.¹³²

2.5 Educational Practice in the Wider Community

Many works on Catholic women religious refer to parish visiting and education. No work has been identified which explores educational practice in out-of-hours programmes, teaching in parish churches and home visits. The question of the role of women religious in establishing the many new urban parishes in which their schools were situated in Western Europe and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries warrants in-depth attention.

Conclusion

Much has been achieved in the history of Catholic education in the last forty years, with a growing body of work on the contribution of the teaching sisters. It has, however, been more usual to consider Catholic educational theory and practice separately. Similarly research on the education and formation of teachers has not been directly connected to practice in schools. This study of Cabrini explores the thinking which informed the practice she aimed to mobilise. Research on education in schools focuses on the formal education of pupils with little reference to the community programmes or supplementary programmes in student residences. Studies also focus on provision for a particular socio-economic group rather than comparing provision for different groups by a single

¹³² Jane Kelly, 'Loreto Education in Australia: The Pioneering Influence of Mother Gonzaga Barry' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smyth (London: Routledge, 2016), 211; Una delle Sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 121.

congregation. There has been little in-depth research on the work of Catholic women religious with bilingual migrants. In adopting a case study approach it has been possible to consider all of these issues in relation to the work of a foundress in the early years of a congregation devoted to working with migrants.

Tom O'Donoghue's work *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922-1965* is unusual in explicitly identifying three elements of the Catholic religion in relation to education: the 'institutional', 'intellectual' and the gentle, Christ-centred or 'mystical'. As demonstrated, one or more of these may inform the educational tradition of a congregation. In this thesis these three elements of religion are developed as an analytical tool in examining educational practice of the past by members of a Catholic congregation. Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice will be identified with examples relating theory and practice. How this understanding is implemented will be analysed in relation to the education of pupils, teachers and learners of different socio-economic groups in different countries. Data collected in this way, will contribute to evaluating the coherence of her Catholic educational practice.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Introduction

A multiple case study research design has been adopted for this research, using generic history of education methods. The decision was informed by consideration of Robert Stake's definition of a case study: 'the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances'.¹ Case studies in the history of education provide opportunities to consider 'the particularity and complexity' of educational institutions within developing local and national political, social and economic circumstances. William Marsden's study of Fleet School, Hampstead in the late nineteenth century is a good example.² Case studies of educational institutions established by Catholic religious congregations in the same period provide an additional transnational dimension. As nation states evolved, the Catholic Church became more global. More Catholic religious congregations worked across a number of countries. This is evident in a number of works in history of education. Maurice Whitehead's study of English Jesuit Education and the collection, *Transnationalism, Gender and the History of Education*, edited by Deirdre Raftery and Marie Clarke provide good examples.³

Yin's caveat that 'the decision to undertake multiple case studies cannot be taken lightly' was given due consideration.⁴ A multiple case study design was chosen in order to reach more valid conclusions on Cabrini's

¹ Robert E Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research*. (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1995), xi.

² W E Marsden, *Educating the Respectable: A Study of Fleet Road Board School, Hampstead, 1879-1903*. (London: The Woburn Press, 1991).

³ Maurice Whitehead, *English Jesuit Education*; Deirdre Raftery and Marie Clarke eds., *Transnationalism, Gender and the History of Education*. (UK and USA: Routledge, 2017).

⁴ Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (London: Sage, 2014), 45.

educational practice. She established 70 foundations in nine countries over 37 years. The aim has been to explore the complexity of each case within the transnational context, bringing together the global, the national and the local. Noah Sobe and Jamie Kowalczyk argue that “‘Contextualising’ a study should not be merely a preparatory activity but should carry across the entirety of the project’.⁵ ‘Contextualising’ is ongoing throughout this research. Chapter 4, ‘Provision Across Nine Nations’ places the studies within a transnational and trans-temporal frame. Three periods of MSC expansion have been identified: the Italian, 1880-1888; the transatlantic, 1889-1895 and the global 1896-1917. Rome 1887-1917, New Orleans 1892-1917 and London 1902-1917 were chosen for the studies. Each of the studies commences in one of periods. This allowed for investigating the extent to which understanding of educational practice and its implementation may have varied according to time, place, learners and the evolving transnational context. In Chapter 8 the findings of the case studies are compared and contrasted with reference to other foundations across the nine nations in which the MSC served.

Each case study has a range of educational provision. The full range of work in which the MSC were involved, apart from the one nursing school, is covered across the three. This includes: free elementary schools in Rome and New Orleans, private schools in Rome and London, an orphanage in New Orleans, an elite international school in London, a residence and educational programme for students of higher education in Rome and vocational schools in New Orleans and Rome. Community

⁵ Noah W Sobe and Jamie A Kowalczyk, ‘The Problem of Context in Comparative Education Research’, *Journal for Educational, Cultural and Psychological Studies* [Rome, Italy] 6 (2012):1. http://www.ledonline.it/ECPS-Journal/allegati/ECPS-2012-6_Sobe.pdf, (accessed 30/01/2015).

education features in all three studies. Pupils across the three studies include some boys as well as girls. The majority were migrants. The different locations allow for consideration of a variety of opportunities for the education and formation of sisters. Some worked in two or all three of the case study locations, providing good examples of what Kay Whitehead refers to as 'transnational careering'.⁶

Rome, New Orleans and London were key international sites for the MSC as a transnational missionary institute. Rome was the centre of both the MSC organisation and the transnational network of contacts that facilitated their global expansion. The Rome schools were showcases and had visitors from many different countries. It was in Rome that the sisters came into contact with the Froebel and Montessori Methods. New Orleans was a prominent centre within the Italian diaspora. Italian migrants were victims of prejudice in all the centres in which the MSC worked in the United States. New Orleans, however, was the most striking example, with the lynching of 11 Italians in 1891. It became a particular focus of interest for the Italian government. They were concerned for the reputation of the new Italian nation abroad. Americans wished to see Italians educated as good American citizens. Both focused on the civilizing mission of education. It is an excellent site for considering Cabrini's approach to citizenship education. London is of particular interest as Cabrini stayed there for almost a year in 1910-11. This is the longest period of time she spent establishing any foundation and therefore provides a good site for exploring her understanding of educational practice and the challenges of implementing it.

⁶ Kay Whitehead, 'Mary Gutteridge: Transnational Careering in the Field of Early Childhood Education' in *Women Educators*, eds. Fitzgerald and Smyth, 121–151.

The three studies allow for consideration of the impact of religion and migration on education. Cabrini and her MSC sisters are best known for their work with Italian migrants in the Americas. The Rome study, however, is also a site for considering migrant education. After becoming the capital of Italy in 1871, Rome became a major centre for migrants from other parts of Italy. Neither the Catholic Church nor the Italian State had made provision for the education of their children. In this period Rome, the traditional centre of Catholicism, was a centre of anti-clericalism. Educational provision was also lacking in New Orleans. Cabrini established a school and orphanage in a migrant Italian neighbourhood. In New Orleans the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Italian government was different.⁷ The Italian State, as Mark Choate has demonstrated, was keen to work with the Catholic Church to promote the 'Emigrant Nation'. Their attitude was similar to that of the French government abroad described by Rebecca Rogers.⁸ The London study is situated in a Protestant area. The London schools had a more mixed intake, with pupils born in England as well as migrants of different nationalities. There were also both economic and educational migrants of the kind referred to by Ciaran O'Neill as, 'Catholics of Consequence'.⁹ Cabrini saw opportunities for education to re-evangelise the baptised in all three cities. She viewed Protestant London, where less than a century had passed since Catholic Emancipation, as 'real' missionary territory.¹⁰

⁷ Choate, *Emigrant Nation?*.

⁸ Rogers, *From the Salon to the Schoolroom*.

⁹ O'Neill, *Catholics of Consequence*.

¹⁰ Until 1908, both England and the United States came under the jurisdiction of the *Sacra Congregatio Christiano Nomini Propaganda*, commonly referred to as the *Propaganda Fide*. This department oversaw the work of the Church in countries which were not Catholic.

An additional consideration is the impact of the national origins of the sisters. This is investigated in terms of relations between teachers and pupils and their families, as well as relations within the MSC convent community. Sisters of the founding communities in Rome and New Orleans were Northern Italians. As Donna Gabaccia has shown, the divisions between northern and southern inhabitants of the newly united Italy were reproduced in the United States.¹¹ Working with Southern Italian migrants provided additional challenges for Catholic priests and sisters originating from the north of Italy. Archbishop Corrigan of New York pointed out in 1889 'I don't know how to resolve the difficulties existing between Northern and Southern Italians'.¹² Young women from Southern Italian families joined the MSC in the United States. The founding community in London in 1902 was multi-national.

A protocol, which Yin considers essential for multiple case designs, was formulated (see appendix 1).¹³ This provides an audit trail 'by which other researchers may validate or challenge the findings or construct alternative arguments'.¹⁴ Whilst providing a framework it allowed for the kind of progressive structuring that Day Ashley found helpful in her multiple case study of private school outreach in India.¹⁵ As recommended by Yin, a pilot

¹¹ Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: UCL Press, 2000).

¹² 'Corrigan to Scalabrini' May 8th, 1889, in *For the Love of Immigrants: Migration Writings and Letters of Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini*, ed., Archbishop Silvano M Tomasi CS (New York: Centre for Migration Studies, 2000), 259.

¹³ Yin, *Case Study Research*, 63.

¹⁴ Michael Bassey, *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), 65.

¹⁵ Laura Day Ashley, 'Case Study Research' in *Research Methods and Methodologies in Education*, eds. James Arthur, Michael Waring, Robert Coe and Larry Hedges (London: Sage, 2012), 105.

study was conducted.¹⁶ London was chosen due to the proximity of the site and archive. The research questions provided the focus. Each study investigated Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice, the extent to which this was implemented and whether a coherent approach to Catholic educational practice is evident. Each is bounded by two further considerations:

1 The establishment of the conditions for Cabrini's educational practice prior to opening the schools.

2 The educational practice evident in:

- a. the schools, orphanages and student residences
- b. the community provision
- c. the education and formation of sisters.

Case studies are often viewed as qualitative research but as Malcolm Tight points out, however, many are quantitative and that the case study lends itself to the mixed methods which have been used in this research.¹⁷

3.1 Data Collection

Gary McCulloch has indicated the wide variety of sources used in history of education research.¹⁸ The case study invites the use of such a range to achieve in-depth consideration of a site. Cabrini did not write a treatise on Education. Other documents are necessary to elicit her understanding of Catholic educational practice. Ruth Watts and Jenny Collins provide good examples of a range of sources from which to elicit data on the history of

¹⁶ Yin, *Case Study Research*, 15.

¹⁷ Malcom Tight, 'Case Study Research' in *The BERA/SAGE Handbook of Educational Research*, eds., Wyse et al., 376-394.

¹⁸ Gary McCulloch, 'Historical Research' in *The BERA/SAGE Handbook of Educational Research* eds., Wyse et al., 295-312.

faith education. Watts used letters, memoirs, magazines, sermons, chapels and school buildings to explore the relationship between Unitarian educational ideals and practice.¹⁹ In relation to Catholic educational practice, Collins used formal convent documents, necrologies, pictures, photographs, personal memoirs, letters, school annual reports and oral testimonies.²⁰ A similarly wide range of sources for use in this research was initially identified, using the essay on sources in Sullivan's *Mother Cabrini "Italian Immigrant of the Century"*.²¹ Cabrini, known for her organisational skills, put the Italian archive in order in 1912, prior to departing for the United States for the last time. Eight weeks after her death, on 4th February 1918, the MSC General Council issued a circular letter to all houses. It notified the sisters of the advice of 'the Cardinal Vicar and many prelates of Rome' to collect 'memories and judgements' of those who knew Cabrini.²² This was to prepare for future beatification and canonisation processes. The letter described the collection process as 'our sacred duty'.²³ As a result, a wealth of contemporary sources, particularly from teachers, exists. Several visits were made to the London and Rome MSC archives and one to the archive at Cabrini University, Pennsylvania. Bassey's advice, to stay focussed on collecting sufficient data to explore significant features of the case, was constantly borne in mind.²⁴ Each case study has used the following: formal MSC documents, reports to the

¹⁹ Ruth Watts, *Gender, Power and Unitarianism in England 1760-1866*. (Harlow: Addison, Wesley, Longman, 1998).

²⁰ For example: Jenny Collins, 'Of sheep's pluck and science exhibitions: the professional life of Mother Bernard Towers RSM (1883–1963)' *History of Education* 38, no.5 (2009); Jenny Collins, 'Have your children got leave to speak?' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds., Raftery and Smyth.

²¹ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 287-300.

²² 4th February 2017, 'Le Assistenti Generali Nella Dolorosa Occasione Della Morte Della Nostra Santa Madre Fondatrice Presentandoci La Nuova Madre Generale: Madre Antoinetta Dell Casa' Circular Letter, Bound Volume, 123-5. LA.

²³ Ibid., 125.

²⁴ Bassey, 47.

authorities, public and private letters, house annals, school documents and records of celebrations, memories of sisters, pupils and others, obituaries and condolences as well as some visual sources.

3.1 Formal MSC Documents

Two kinds of formal MSC documents have been used. The first are those written by Cabrini to guide the life and work of the sisters: the 1881 Rule, the 1907 Constitutions and a 1913 set of job descriptions (the 1913 '*Uffici*').²⁵ The second are reports to the Church and civil authorities written by Cabrini, her assistants in Rome or local superiors.

Elizabeth Smyth describes sisters-in-religion in transnational congregations as bound to each other by 'the invisible bonds that are evident through the congregational constitutions'.²⁶ The terms 'Rule' and 'Constitutions' refer to the same kind of document. In the case of the MSC Cabrini wrote the 'Rule' in 1881 on founding the Institute and revised it as 'the Constitutions' in 1907, for the final approval of the Institute by the Vatican. They set out the aims of the Institute and the conditions Cabrini considered important for the education and formation of sisters to achieve these aims. By the early twentieth century each sister had her own copy. The Honor Oak archive has the copy which belonged to Mother Stanislaus Sullivan, an Irish American who served there from 1910 until her death in 1988.

²⁵ 'Regole dell'Istituto', AG; 'Costituzioni dell'Istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù 1907', ('Costituzioni' G1a1 Protocollo # 2691, AG, 15.); 1913 '*Uffici*'. AG.

²⁶ Elizabeth Smyth, 'Continuity and Change within the Toronto Convent Academies of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and the Loreto Sister, 1847-1950' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds., Raftery and Smyth, 45.

Cabrini wrote the Rule herself at a time when it was common for male clergy or members of the hierarchy to prepare or significantly influence these documents. Maria Susanna Garroni has shown this in her work on the Pallottini Sisters, established by the Palottini Fathers as their ancillaries.²⁷ There is also no indication that she based it on the Rule of another congregation. The 1793 Rules and Constitutions of the Presentation Sisters, for example, were based on those of the Ursulines.²⁸ It is therefore useful in eliciting Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice. At 50 pages long it is also concise unlike, for example, St Teresa Verzieri's three volumes.²⁹ It contains a chapter of 190 words on schools, and several on community education as well as covering the expectations of leaders and sisters' community and spiritual life. It also demonstrates Cabrini's style of writing, leadership and consistent focus on virtues. De Maria pointed out that when presented to the Sacred Congregation the original Rule 'caused the members to doubt whether these could really be regarded as rules because they were more aptly counsels'.³⁰ The 1907 Constitutions, whilst keeping much of the original, differ in that there are no chapters on the works of the MSC. They do include several useful short chapters on the various roles of sisters including the teacher, the prefect who was responsible for pastoral care and the novice mistress. These are also included in a booklet of 12 job descriptions (*'uffici'*), printed in 1913 and available in every house.³¹ By

²⁷ Maria Susanna Garroni, 'Genere e Transnazionalismo: Una Congregazione Italiana negli Stati Uniti, 1889-1935' in *Sorelle d'oltreoceano*, ed. Garroni, 113.

²⁸ Catherine Nowlan-Roebeck, 'Sisters as Teachers in Nineteenth Century Ireland: The Presentation Order' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds. Raftery and Smythe, 77-98.

²⁹ Lucetta Scaraffia, *Francesca Cabrini* (Milan: Paoline, 2004).

³⁰ Una delle Sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 40.

³¹ Maria Barbagallo, *'Buoni Cristiani'*.

the turn of the century printed leaflets explaining the work of the Institute were being distributed to assist recruitment.³²

Two sets of reports to authorities have provided much quantitative as well as qualitative data. They are very useful in giving an indication of the implementation of Cabrini's practice in the case study foundations and elsewhere. They also frame this in a transnational context. The first set consists of a 1900 prospectus and three reports to the Holy See dated 1907, 1910 and 1913.³³ The second is a set of annual reports to the Italian Consulate in New Orleans for the period 1906-1918.³⁴

The 1900 prospectus would have been produced to send with funding requests. The Reports to the Holy See were produced in connection with the final approval of the Institute in 1907. These sources list the foundations and the date of founding with a brief description of the works of each. Statistics include numbers of sisters, school pupils, orphans and those taught in parish and other community educational work. The data included differs, restricting comparison between years. They have been very useful, however, as the starting point for the 'Provision across Nine Nations' Chapter. The limits of formal documents as a source for the work of Catholic women religious, identified by Tom O'Donoghue and Anne Chapman, were evident.³⁵ These MSC reports provide the 'official' version of the foundations, with reference to local bishops and community needs.

³² *'L'istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù'*, LA.

³³ 1900 *Prospetto delle Case delle Missionarie del S.Cuore di Gesù*; 1907 'Relazione 1907', (Relazione del Istituto MSC, K2a1, AG, 11); 1910 'Relazione Triennale dell'Istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù Dal 1907-1910', (Relazione del Istituto MSC, C1a1 Protocollo #1881 AG,16-17).

³⁴ Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918, CR, D74a.

³⁵ Tom O'Donoghue and Anne Chapman, 'A social Semiotic Analysis of the Discursive Construction of Teacher Identity in the "Book of Rules and Customs" of the Australian Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus' *History of Education* 40, no. 3 (2011): 91-407.

They omit the role of network contacts and Cabrini's own objectives in relation to the needs of her transnational educational Institute. The section on New York in the 1907 Report makes no mention of Bishop Scalabrini's role. That on London mentions only the need to recruit English speaking sisters for the United States, not the need for a foothold, should anti-clericalism force them out of continental Europe. It has, therefore, been important to cross-reference these sources with Cabrini's letters and the house annals.

Reports to the Italian Consulate were written by the superior in New Orleans who was also the headmistress, each year from 1906 to 1918. Part of the formal monitoring process, they also provide the 'teacher's voice'. The consulate gave funds to the MSC orphanage and schools in New Orleans. This was part of what Mark Choate describes as 'Italy's educational project for emigrants'.³⁶ Reports are useful to collect data on pupils. This includes numbers of orphans and school pupils, their nationalities, gender and ages. School attendance and mobility rates are evident. The language used to describe the needs of the pupils and families and reasons for entry demonstrate the attitudes of the superior. They are useful in assessing the implementation of Cabrini's invisible pedagogy and addressing the needs of the individual as well as contributing to the 'teacher's voice'. They provide data on the curriculum, including gendered provision, pedagogy and assessment and budgets.

³⁶ Choate, *Emigrant Nation*, 115.

3.3 Letters

Rebecca Earle points out that ‘letters form the hidden underpinnings of much historical research’.³⁷ Cabrini’s letters do indeed underpin a good deal of this research as she did not write a treatise on education. Few of the letters are devoted mainly or completely to education. As Sullivan found with regard to immigration, however, many of them provide some information.³⁸ Her letters, written to mobilise her educational practice, provide data relating to all three research questions. The style and language of the letters, as well as the behaviour modelled, are as important as the contents. They have been used to consider ‘invisible pedagogy’.

There are two kinds of letters. The public letters published at the time and private letters written to individuals. Cabrini, like John Henry Newman, used public letters published in pamphlets, as a literary device to contribute to contemporary debates.³⁹ The ‘Travels’ (*Viaggi*), written between 1890 and 1912, were published in pamphlet form shortly after they were written.⁴⁰ Capitalising on the popularity of travel letters at the time, several respond to secular arguments on faith education. Cabrini’s letter to the 1908 Italian Women’s Congress is another example. This was read aloud and included in the published conference proceedings.⁴¹ A five

³⁷ Rebecca Earle, ‘Introduction: Letters, Writers and the Historian’ in *Epistolary selves: letters and letter-writers, 1600-1945*, ed. Rebecca Earle (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 1.

³⁸ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*.

³⁹ For example, John Henry Newman, *A Letter Addressed to the Duke of Norfolk on Occasion of Mr. Gladstone’s Recent Expostulation* (New York: Catholic Publication Society, 1875).

⁴⁰ Those from 1891, 1898, 1903 and 1905 are displayed in the Cabriniana Room, Cabrini University, Pennsylvania, USA.

⁴¹ March 1908, ‘Letter from Francesca Cabini to Presidenza della Contessa Danieli Camozzi, for the Italian Women’s Congress’ in Lucetta Scaraffia, ‘Lettera di Francesca Cabrini’, Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *People on the Move* N° 94, April 2004, 99-108. Available:

volume *Epistolario*, printed in 2002, facilitates access to 2054 private letters.⁴² They were written between 1868 and 1917 to individuals and MSC communities.

Most of the 'Travels' were written during Cabrini's long ocean voyages, providing the title, '*Between One Wave and Another*' (*Tra un'onda e l'altra*) for various collected editions in Italian.⁴³ Joyce Goodman has indicated the potential of this kind of source:

The salience of the process of travel in spaces of movement for the development and reworking of teachers' professional ideas, identities and practice points to a seam to be mined in future research.⁴⁴

The 'process of travel' may well have contributed to the more detailed and coherent expositions of her educational ideas in some of the later 'Travels'. Three dating from 1904, 1905 and 1906 were addressed to the students of the prestigious *Istituto Superiore Di Magistero Femminile*, usually referred to as the *Magistero*, who lived in the MSC residence in Rome.⁴⁵ They have been used to elicit her expectations of the Catholic professional teacher. They have also been used to consider her understanding of the secular educational practice of modernity and the extent to which she articulated a progressive Catholic alternative. Her arguments are compared with those in earlier private letters, to consider whether their roots are to be found in Italy. This contributes to evaluating

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/pom2004_94/rc_pc_migrants_pom94_Scaraffia.html (accessed 2/10/ 2017).

⁴² Imelda Cipolla MSC and Maria Regina Canale MSC, eds., *Epistolario di Santa Francesca Saverio Cabrini: 1868-1917, volumes 1-5* (Rome: L'Istituto Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù, 2002).

⁴³ Imelda Cipolla MSC, ed., *Tra un'onda e l'altra. Viaggi di Santa Francesca Saverio Cabrini* (Rome: Centro Cabriniano, 4th edition, 2012). (*Tra Un'onda*).

⁴⁴ Joyce Goodman, 'Transatlantic Crossings and Professional Lives: Ellen Knox's Travel between Canada and England', *History of Education Researcher* 89 (2012): 36-45.

⁴⁵ Letter 16 : 'Alle alunne dell'Istituto di Magistero', Da New Orleans, Maggio 1904, 501-517; Letter 17: 'Alle alunne dell'Istituto di Magistero' Da Denver, maggio 1905, 521-531; Letter 18: 'Alle alunne dell'Istituto di Magistero' Da Chicago, febbraio 1906, 534-563 in *Tra Un'onda*.

the coherence of her ideas within the trans-temporal and transnational contexts.

Many of the 'Travel' letters were intended to recruit benefactors and sisters. They therefore provide details of the work of the MSC abroad and the plight of Italian migrants, with whom they worked. They are useful for considering the invisible pedagogy modelled by Cabrini, for example, how the language she used demonstrates her attitude to pupils and their families. They are also examined in relation to their use as a means of educating her audience in the theology or understanding of her faith, on which her practice was based.⁴⁶ Lawrence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen Mangion point out that as women were rarely able to write philosophy or theology they used 'the language of more acceptable literary devices' to communicate theological ideas.⁴⁷ In his 1925 introduction to the 'Travels', Ottavio Turchi referred to Cabrini's 'discourses not unworthy of the homilies of bishops for their eloquence and learned commentaries as well as for the doctrinal exactness of their interpretation'.⁴⁸ The 2012 edition has been used as it includes references to the scripture passages.

A significant public letter, written by Cabrini in 1908, was discovered by Lucetta Scaraffia in 2002.⁴⁹ It was amongst the Acts of the First National Congress of Italian Women. The event is considered a seminal moment in

⁴⁶ Note: Theology is understood as 'Fides quaerens intellectum' or 'faith seeking understanding', St Anselm, cited in Ian Logan, *Reading Anselm's Proslogion* (USA: Ashgate, 2009), 24.

⁴⁷ Lawrence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen M. Mangion, 'Introduction' in *Gender Catholicism and Spirituality*, eds. Lux-Sterritt and Mangion, 15.

⁴⁸ Ottavio Turchi SJ, 'Introduction' to *The Travels of Mother Cabrini*, trans. Giovanni Serpentelli (Exeter: Streatham Hall, 1925), xiii.

⁴⁹ The letter was published in: *Consiglio nazionale delle donne italiane, Atti del I° Congresso Nazionale donne italiane, Roma, 24 -30 aprile, 1908* (Stabilimento tipografico della società editrice laziale, 1912). Cited in Lucetta Scaraffia, 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini'.

the history of Italian feminism. The committee invited Cabrini to address the 1908 Congress on Women and Emigration.⁵⁰ She was not able to attend due to commitments in South America. Written in Brazil, it sets out her ideas on the subject with a coherence not always evident in other letters.

As well as correspondence with individual sisters and open letters addressed to every MSC house, the *Epistolario* includes letters sent by Cabrini to members of the clergy and hierarchy, former pupils, benefactors and the Italian ambassador as well as her sister and brother. Although they were often written hurriedly, Cabrini clarifies her understanding of Catholic educational practice in many. Taken as a whole they contribute to considering the coherence of her approach. Those sent to individual sisters are also examples of practice in education and formation. They may be considered examples of what Quentin Skinner terms 'speech acts'.⁵¹ Letters written to all houses each New Year between 1887 and 1917 focussed on a spiritual theme, providing further data.⁵² Those sent to superiors, who were also the heads of the educational establishments, have been used to consider the extent of subsidiarity. Interactive sources, the letters demonstrate the relationship between Cabrini and the recipients. She addressed sisters as 'My Dearest Daughter' or 'Daughters', Showing a concern that warrants Hartley's

⁵⁰ *Epistolario* 4, March 24, 1908, 25.

⁵¹ Quentin Skinner, "'Social Meaning" and the explanation of social action' in *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, ed., James Tully (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 79-96.

⁵² The edited collection has been used: Canale, M. R. MSC (ed.) (1987) *La Stella del Mattino* Rome: Centro Cabriniano.

description of wartime letters as ‘mothering at a distance’.⁵³ As Ursula Infante explained:

Her letters are alive and moving for she was writing not only to her devoted daughters to direct, console and inform but also to her wayward and difficult daughters to correct, exhort and pardon.⁵⁴

Mangion found that letters give ‘a more unvarnished impression of religious life’ than other sources.⁵⁵ Some contain Cabrini’s response to sisters, indicating problems in the implementation of practice. A distinctive feature is evidence of difficulties experienced by superiors and Cabrini herself, in managing other sisters. This may be unique, as Tom O’Donoghue and Judith Harford have pointed out:

There are also no accounts of which we are aware on internal strife within individual communities and their congregations because of how sister principals carried out their assigned roles.⁵⁶

Several letters from 1905 include details of a rebellion by a group of sisters in Europe, handled by the Rome superior whilst Cabrini was in America. These are cross-referenced with the accounts in De Maria’s biography and Sullivan’s research using the documents produced by the Devil’s Advocate during the canonisation investigation.

The letters also provide data on Cabrini’s extensive network of contacts. Eckhardt Fuchs has highlighted the need to differentiate between networks and formal organisations and between intentional and

⁵³ J. Hartley, “‘Letters are *everything* these days’ Mothers and Letters in the Second World War’ in ed. Rebecca Earle, *Epistolary selves: letters and letter-writers, 1600-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).

⁵⁴ Ursula Infante MSC, ‘Foreword’ in *Letters of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini*, ed., Ursula Infante MSC (USA: MSC, 1970), trans., Ursula Infante MSC.

⁵⁵ Carmen M Mangion, *Contested identities: Active Women Religious in Nineteenth-Century England and Wales* (PhD Thesis: University of London, 2005), 15.

⁵⁶ Tom O’Donoghue and Judith Harford, ‘Addressing the Apparent Paradox of the Catholic Sister Principal: 1940–1965’, *History of Education* 42, no.6 (2013): 781.

unintentional networks.⁵⁷ The term 'network' is used in this study to refer to ties between Cabrini and other individual sisters and individuals outside the MSC. The letters identify how these ties led to interactions with these contacts. John Urry's work highlights the significance of network capital to geographical mobility.⁵⁸ The data, considered with that on Church and government authorities, has contributed to the consideration of how Cabrini established the conditions for her practice. The letters, along with 248 short biographies included in Volume 5 of the *Epistolario* have proved invaluable in tracking the transnational teaching experience of some sisters. They also show the role of relatively immobile recipients whose significance, as Paolo Boccagni has pointed out, 'more often than not, empirical studies on transnational migration have simply ignored'.⁵⁹

3.4 Testimonies of Teachers, Pupils and Prominent Figures

House annals have been used extensively in the case studies providing qualitative and quantitative data on the implementation of Cabrini's educational practice. They also provide the 'voice' of participant teachers, as the secretaries also taught in the schools, for example, Mother Josephine Lombardi in New Orleans and Mother Maria Ajani in London. The original MSC House Annals (*Memorie di Fondazione*) were handwritten in Italian. A small hard-covered exercise book for London and 1918 digitised typescripts for Rome and New Orleans were used in this research. The relevant house annals do not cover the entire period of each case study and there is no common period covered across the three.

⁵⁷ Eckhardt Fuchs, 'Networks and the History of Education', *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no.2 (2007): 193.

⁵⁸ Urry, *Mobilities*, 196.

⁵⁹ Paulo Boccagni, 'Rethinking Transnational Studies: Transnational Ties and the Transnationalism of Everyday Life', *European Journal of Social Theory* 15, no. 1, (2012): 124.

Those for Rome and New Orleans commence with the foundation of the missions in 1887 and 1892 respectively, providing good data on the start-ups.⁶⁰ The 140 typed pages for Rome cover 17 years ending in 1904 and the 62 pages for New Orleans cover eight years ending in 1900. There is a separate 17 page account for the establishment of the new orphanage in 1904-6.⁶¹ London has no annals for the first eight years from 1902. A detailed set commences in the summer of 1910, with 150 pages for the following eight years until 1918.⁶²

Descriptions of school and convent buildings and grounds have provided data on MSC priorities regarding the materiality of schooling, in particular the desire for outdoor play space. House Annals are the single source of data on the curriculum for some periods; in the case of Rome, from a list of teachers and their subjects included at the start of each year and for New Orleans and London details within the text. Pupil numbers are included as well as their nationalities and in London their religion. The descriptions of *academie* (school performances), held on special occasions give an indication of the breadth of the curricular experience for those at the free elementary schools. Records of inspection visits throw light on assessment and monitoring as do references to examinations. They have also been good sources of data on community educational provision including numbers, descriptions of festive oratories and challenging pupils, as well as the teaching role of lay sisters. The annals refer to some provision for the education and formation of sisters. All have some information on retreats. Cabrini was present for some of these and

⁶⁰ 'Relazione della Casa di Roma ,1887-88', AG (RR); 'Memorie della Casa di New Orleans 1892', AG (M1).

⁶¹ 'Memorie Ortranotofio Fondazione dell'Orfanotrofio di New Orleans, Giugno 1904', AG (MO).

⁶² 'Memorie della fondazione del collegio in Forest Hill, Woodville Hall, Honor Oak Road', AG (MF).

recorded her private thoughts in a spiritual diary. This was published in 1982 as '*Pensieri e Propositi*' and has been used to cross-reference the accounts in the annals.⁶³ Data on teachers has been cross-referenced with other annals and biographical notes in the *Epistolario* to identify their place of birth, age, education, qualifications and social background as well as their international experience.

These MSC annals differ markedly, however, from the 'lifeless' documents described by Deidre Raftery:

They describe important events, but convent annalists were not allowed to make personal comments or value judgements, so annals can be somewhat lifeless.⁶⁴

A distinctive feature of the MSC annals is the range of emotions evident in the language used: delight at the achievement of the pupils, enthusiasm for community work and at times fear of the authorities. This is both to describe the educational practice of other teachers and that of the group in which the author is a participant. They enable consideration of teachers' educational ideals using Margaret Archer's conceptualisation of emotions as 'commentaries on our concerns'.⁶⁵ Similarly, Barbara Rosenwein's 'notion of emotional communities' has also been helpful in considering evidence for the solidarity of the case study community in

⁶³ Imelda Cipolla MSC, and Maria Regina Canale MSC eds. *Pensieri e Propositi*. (Rome: Centro Cabriniano, 1982).

⁶⁴ Deidre Raftery, 'From Kerry to Katong: in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds., Raftery and Smyth, 32.

⁶⁵ Margaret S Archer, 'Emotions as Commentaries on Human Concerns', in *Theory and Research on Human Emotions*, ed. J H Turner (Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2004), 327 - 356.

implementing Cabrini's ideals including the loving care.⁶⁶ Rosenwein argues that the researcher can study emotions expressed within a community to 'uncover systems of feeling, to establish what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them'.⁶⁷ The Italian sister secretaries in New Orleans and London also provide examples of the 'migrant teacher's voice' for use in investigating the sisters' sense of solidarity with their migrant pupils and their families. This solidarity has been considered in the light of the emerging concept of 'homing' developed by the Italian sociologist Paulo Boccagni and the 'Homing-The Home-Migration Nexus' team.⁶⁸ It encompasses the issues around making migrants 'feel at home' and migrants 'creating new homes'.⁶⁹ They also provide the 'voice of the Catholic teacher', reacting to treatment by representatives of anti-clerical Italian authorities both at home and abroad including fear generated by an unannounced visit by government inspectors in Rome. The New Orleans 1904-6 orphanage annals provide a vivid picture of the difficulties encountered through the activities of members of the masonic lodge within the Italian colony there.

The 'voice' of the MSC teachers is also found in retrospective accounts referred to as '*memorie*', produced during Cabrini's lifetime and after her death. During her lifetime individuals and groups of sisters produced these to mark anniversaries. At around the turn of the century the sisters were using their own printing press in Rome. Circular letters containing these

⁶⁶ Barbara Rosenwein 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context: Journal of the History and Philosophy of the Emotions* 1/1 (2010), 12.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 12.

⁶⁸ 'Homing-The Home-Migration Nexus', available: <http://homing.soc.unitn.it/team/> (Accessed May 19, 2017).

⁶⁹ Ibid.

'memorie' were sent to all houses from Rome.⁷⁰ The one for the 1912 Rome Silver Jubilee contains *'memorie'* which give an indication of how sisters viewed their agency and the distinctive impact of their educational practice, in relation to the social and power structures.⁷¹ They are helpful in addressing the sisters' understanding of their role as progressive, female, missionary educators in the context of the anti-clerical Rome of their time.

Personal testimonies from sisters, following Cabrini's death on 22nd December 1917, responded to a request from the Mother house in Rome. Dated 4th February 1918, it requested that relevant house annals be sent and advised *'supplementing, where you find gaps, with memories of the sisters'*.⁷² These accounts written retrospectively, like oral testimonies increasingly used by historians of women religious, including Carmen Mangion and Flora Derouian, raise issues regarding accuracy and selection.⁷³ Querciolo Mazzonis' work on Saint Angela Merici, however, used *'a recollection of testimonies given by four friends 28 years after her death'*.⁷⁴ The MSC circular also advised *'the strictest truthfulness is recommended'*, resulting in frankness in the observations of the sisters. This as noted earlier, with reference to the observations of O'Donoghue, Hartford and Raftery, is unusual in convent sources. One account used in

⁷⁰ Circular Letters 1891-1957, bound volume, LA.

⁷¹ *'Ricordando'* in 21 November 1912, Circolare N.19, 13, bound volume, 80. LA.

⁷² *'Le Assistenti Generali Nella Dolorosa Occasione Della Morte Della Nostra Santa Madre Fondatrice Presentandoci La Nuova Madre Generale: Madre Antoinetta Dell Casa'*, Circular Letter, February 4th, 1918, Bound Volume London Archive, 124.

⁷³ Carmen M. Mangion, *'Commemorative communities and community scripts: interviewing nuns, Sources for the History of Women Religious: Medieval to Modern'*; Flora Derouian, *'Italian Nuns Speak Out: Oral Testimonies from Nuns of Post-WW2 Italy'*, HWRBI conference, UCD, Dublin, 8th-9th June 2017.

⁷⁴ Mazzonis, *'The Impact of Renaissance gender-related notions'*.

the London study described problems resulting from staff mobility in the first London school in 1908.⁷⁵ Mother Domenica Bianchi's recollection of her fear and disgust in reacting to the the southern Italians, when she led the advance party, is used in considering '*amorevolezza*' or loving care, in the New Orleans study.⁷⁶ A seven page account signed by four sisters⁷⁷ covers the period 1902-1907 in London, not covered in the *Memorie di Fondazione*. There are also noticeable gaps. The references to the superior evident in other MSC house annals are missing for London in this period. This prompted questions. Cross-referencing with Cabrini's letters, however, showed the negative impact of the leadership and management of the first two superiors leading to their removal.

The biography by Cabrini's travelling companion, Mother Saverio De Maria, also provides the perspective of a teacher, as she had her *patente*.⁷⁸ Although written in the style of a dutiful daughter it was thoroughly researched. The first draft was completed in 1909. Additional references to the house annals and personal testimonies were added before publication in 1928. Two chapters on Cabrini's educational practice, 'Mother and Teacher' and 'the Education of the Young' provide De Maria's professional perspective, as well as data to cross- reference with other sources.⁷⁹ It also discusses the rebellion by the group of sisters in 1905.

⁷⁵ 'Memorie Londra, sulla Fondazione in Londra', (Memorie, AG). (ML).

⁷⁶ Domenica Bianchi MSC, 'Scritti che riguardano la casa di New Orleans-Louisiana-America del Nord'. (Scritti).

⁷⁷ Mother Domenica Bianchi, Mother Maria di Gesù(Ajani), Mother Tommasina Didoni and Mother Fede Mandelli.

⁷⁸ Cipolla & Canale (eds.) 5, 690.

⁷⁹ Una delle sue figlie, La *Madre*, 35-48; 215-243.

There are a significant number of sources written by the teaching students in Rome. They comment on educational practice from their professional perspective. The programme of the 1906 performance in Rome contains an address given by a student.⁸⁰ A 20 page circular sent in November 1912 to mark the Rome Silver Jubilee contains a letter from a *Magistero* student on behalf of the boarders.⁸¹ Letters from 15 former *Magistero* students, working as teachers, were written after Cabrini's death in 1918. They can be compared with seven greetings sent by Milan alumnae to the sisters for the School Silver Jubilee in 1910.⁸² Sources from only two school pupils have been identified: an autobiography and a newspaper article providing memories of two Italian American former pupils in New Orleans.⁸³ The sources all give a positive view of the educational practice and none have been found so far to give a contrasting opinion.

The February 1918 circular also requested that 'letters of prominent figures' be sent to Rome. These constitute many of the wide range of testimonies published by the MSC in a 500 page volume entitled, *In Memoria della Rev.ma Madre Francesca Saverio Cabrini* in 1919.⁸⁴ An unusual source, intended to prepare some ground for the beatification, it consists of discourses, condolences, testimonies and a section entitled 'Voice of the Press'. Most are in English and Italian, some in both languages others in Spanish, Portuguese and French. They have provided

⁸⁰ *Trattenimento Accademico per festeggiare il Venticinquesimo anniversario della fondazione dell'istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù and La consecrazione della Chiesa del SS. Redentore* (Rome: Tipographia Eredi Cav. A. Befani, 1907), LA.

⁸¹ 21 November 1912, Circolare N.19, bound volume, 74-83, LA.

⁸² Maria Barbagallo MSC, *Una Scuola che Educa il Cuore e la Ragione*. (Melegnano: Edizione Gemini Grafica, 2009).

⁸³ 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi: Recalls a talk with Mother Cabrini', *Clarion Herald*, January 17, 1974. CR; Charles P. Greco, *With God's Help, Memoirs of Bishop Charles P. Greco*. (New Haven, CT: Knights of Columbus, 1889).

⁸⁴ MSC ed., *In Memoria della Rev.ma Madre Francesca Saverio Cabrini*. (New York: Bernasconi, 1919).

contemporary assessments of the implementation of Cabrini's educational practice from both inside and outside of the Catholic Church. There are the customary contributions from clergy and hierarchy. More unusual sources are those from representatives of secular authorities, including the Italian Ambassador to the United States, Barone Mayor des Planches and the Commissioner for Emigration, Admiral Carlo Leone Reynaudi. The memories of benefactors give an indication of the means of funding educational provision. A good example is that provided by the Countess Spottiswood Mackin, an American benefactor who assisted with the Paris foundation, as she writes a good deal more about her own contribution and that of her circle, than about Cabrini.⁸⁵

3.5 School Documents

Few school documents have been identified. The three prospectus and two records of celebrations provided rich data relating to the implementation of practice in fee-paying schools and the student residence in London and Rome. They all give details of entry requirements, curriculum, fees and an indication of teaching approaches. One from London and another from Rome consist of folded sheets, printed on both sides, dating from 1910.⁸⁶ The third for London is a 26 page booklet printed in the United States along with other publications for the 1914 Silver Jubilee of the missions.⁸⁷ It contains eight photographs showing buildings, the dining room, a dormitory and grounds. The

⁸⁵ Countess Spottiswood Mackin, 'Memories of Rev Mother Francesca Saverio Cabrini, Foundress and Superior General of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who took flight to heaven in Chicago the 22nd of December 1917', March 29, 1921. CR.

⁸⁶ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 3 Via Montebello. CR; 'Sacred Heart School, Honor Oak Road, S.E.' CR. The London prospectus is referred to by Cabrini in letters of late 1910 and the Rome one is the same format.

⁸⁷ 'The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Residing in London, Silver Jubilee of the Missions, 1914'. CR.

approach to teaching is described in some detail. As well as comparing it with other sources written by Cabrini, it has been compared with primary sources of the same period on the Montessori Method to assess the impact of training in the Method attended by the headmistress. It is unlikely that the free schools and orphanages in New Orleans had such documents but the data collected from the reports to the Consul allows comparison of practice with pupils from different social backgrounds.

Practice with fee paying pupils and students in higher education is evident in two records of *academie* attended by Cabrini. A professionally printed programme from the Rome celebration of the 25th anniversary of the MSC foundation is helpful. It includes details of musical pieces performed, the organising committee, the script of a discourse on, 'The MSC and the education of Women' and an address by a *Magistero* student.⁸⁸ The script of a 1910 play shows that the London pupils enacted a visit by the Child Jesus, who brings symbols of virtues and explains them.⁸⁹ With Cabrini present, it is likely that the sisters' would aim to show that they had implemented her aims relating to forming the heart in 'the practice of virtue'. They are therefore particularly helpful in eliciting their understanding. No such documents remain for the orphanage and free schools in New Orleans but the Annals do give several detailed accounts of celebrations for comparisons of practice with pupils from different social backgrounds.

⁸⁸ *Trattenimento Accademico per Festeggiare il Venticinquesimo Anniversario*. LA.

⁸⁹ 'To the Most Venerated Mother General and Foundress on the Thirtieth Happy Anniversary of the Foundation of the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart by Her Affectionate Children the Pupils of the Convent at Wickham Road Brockley, November 14th 1910', *Memorie*, AG.

3.6 Visual Sources

Although the sources available are predominantly documentary ones, there are also some visual ones. Their use reflects a growing trend in history of education, referred to by Ines Dussel as a 'Visual Turn'.⁹⁰ The 2013 'Materialising the Spirit Conference' of the History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI) demonstrated that visual sources are widely used to research the history of women religious.⁹¹ These include buildings, statues, artefacts and pictorial sources as well as more recent work on films, made and commissioned by Catholic women religious, for example, that of Edel Robinson.⁹² Statues and photographs of statues have been used to consider the hidden curriculum in the case studies, giving an institutional, cultural perspective as promoted by Jon Prosser.⁹³ Christine Trimmingham Jack's study of symbols in a picture on display in a school of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart and Susan O'Brien's work on Images of the Child Jesus provided good examples. Drawings of class teaching, like the one used by Hilary Minns, have not been found nor photographs of the kind used by Jennie Collins to consider visible pedagogy.⁹⁴ Gary McCulloch, however, points out that 'even when

⁹⁰ Ines Dussel, 'The Visual Turn in the History of Education: Four Comments for a Historiographical Discussion' in *Rethinking the History of Education: An Intercontinental Perspective on the Questions, Methods and Knowledge of Schools*, ed. Thomas S Popkewitz (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 29-49.

⁹¹ 'Materialising the Spirit: Spaces, Objects and Art in the Cultures of Women Religious', H-WRBI Annual Conference, Senate House, London, September 2013.

⁹² Edel Robinson, 'Films Made and Commissioned by Irish Missionary Societies of Women 1947-1963: Visitation the Story of the Medical Missionaries of Mary and the lost "colour film"', H-WRBI conference, UCD Dublin, 8th-9th June 2017.

⁹³ John Prosser, 'Visual Methods and the Visual Culture of Schools', *Visual Studies* 22No1, (2007): 13-30; Christine Trimmingham Jack, 'Sacred Symbols, School Ideology and the Construction of Subjectivity', *Paedagogica Historica* 34:3, (1998): 771-794; Susan O'Brien, 'A Spirituality Represented: Images of the Holy Child in the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, England since 1846', 'Materialising the Spirit', September 2013.

⁹⁴ Hilary Minns, 'Catherine McAuley and the Education of Irish Roman Catholic Children in the Mid-Nineteenth Century' in *Practical Visionaries: Women, Education and Social Progress 1790-1930* in eds. Mary Hilton & Pam Hirsch (Harlow, Pearson, 2000), 52-65; Jennie Collins, 'Of Sheep's pluck and science

artificially posed', photographs are useful.⁹⁵ Groups of pupils or sisters posing with a statue are common and indicate the invisible pedagogy used to reinforce ideas of Divine friendship. Photographs have also been used to identify school uniform and to give clues to the ages and nationalities of pupils. Along with photographs of the interior and exterior of school buildings these sources, as Cathy Burke, Peter Cunningham and Ian Grosvenor have shown, are significant pieces of the jigsaw of educational practice.⁹⁶

It has been possible to study the school buildings for all three case studies either through site visits or the use of photographs in archives and celebration booklets.⁹⁷ They materialise the expansion and development of the educational work of the MSC as they moved from apartments and rented houses to large campuses reflecting an international trend identified by Michael O'Boyle in his work on convent buildings in England and Ireland.⁹⁸ Contemporary descriptions of some of the buildings in the house annals and De Maria's biography have added to the picture. Photographs of chapels, a dining room, a dormitory, courtyard and campus grounds have been used to consider the impact of materiality on educational practice. Two sets of visual sources, showing art works, have

exhibitions: the professional life of Mother Bernard Towers RSM' (1883-1963), *History of Education* 38 no.5 (2009): 649-666.

⁹⁵ Gary McCulloch, 'Historical Research' in *The BERA/SAGE Handbook of Educational Research*, eds. Wyse et al. (London: Sage, 2017), 305.

⁹⁶ Cathy Burke, Peter Cunningham, and Ian Grosvenor, 'Putting Education in its Place: Space, Place and Materialities in the History of Education', *History of Education* 39, no. 6 (2010): 677-680.

⁹⁷ MSC, *Cinquant'anni di Vita* (Milan: MSC, 1931).

⁹⁸ Michael O'Boyle, 'The nature and character of convent buildings in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', 'Materialising the Spirit', London, September 2013.

been identified. One is by sisters and the other by students.⁹⁹ They are both greeting cards with intricate coloured illustrations of flowers.

3.7 Interpreting Case Study Findings

Day Ashley found that analysis of case study findings was an ongoing process and this research followed a similar pattern.¹⁰⁰ For example, the London draft was revised using data collected on trips to the archives in Rome and Pennsylvania. Bearing in mind Yin's advice on the need to ensure that alternative perspectives are considered, examples in many instances have been pieced together from a number of sources, as already demonstrated.¹⁰¹ Where quantitative data has been used to support answers to the research questions the limitations of the conclusions have been stated.

Gary Thomas has termed the findings of case studies 'exemplary knowledge' that is, knowledge which draws 'its legitimacy from phronesis as distinct from theory'.¹⁰² He argues that 'that kind of practical reasoning and judgement ... is explicable best in terms of the particular: the case'.¹⁰³ Richard Pring, however, has pointed out with reference to case studies that 'all situations are unique in some aspects but not in others'.¹⁰⁴ Whilst it has not been the aim of this research to develop a general theory of Cabrinian education, the findings support the arguments of Christina Hoon

⁹⁹ Maria Regina Canale MSC and Rachele Tagliabue MSC eds., *La Stella del Mattino*. (Rome: Arti Grafiche Baldassarri, 1989); Barbagallo, *Una Scuola che Educa*.

¹⁰⁰ Day Ashley, 'Case Study Research' in *Research Methods*, eds., Arthur et al., 106.

¹⁰¹ Yin, 149.

¹⁰² Gary Thomas, 'The Case: Generalisation, Theory and Phronesis in Case Study Research', *Oxford Review of Education* 37 no.1 (2011): 21.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 24.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Pring, *Philosophy of Educational Research*. (London: Continuum, 2000), 42.

and Malcolm Tight, that the intensive focus and in-depth approach of case study research lends itself to theory building.¹⁰⁵

3.8 Writing Up

Bassey devotes a chapter of his volume to writing up cases studies and points to the challenge of a large quantity of particularised details.¹⁰⁶ The 'Provision across Nine Nations' chapter includes a number of tables and maps to display large quantities of data simply and effectively. Whilst Mangion's work using databases informed the issues considered, Connolly's advice that Microsoft Excel is 'capable of performing most of the common forms of statistical analyses' for a 'simple quantitative educational research project' was heeded.¹⁰⁷ Maps in Roy Lowe and Yoshihito Yasuhara's transnational study of the origins of higher learning provided models for the use of maps in a transnational study.¹⁰⁸ Foundations have been plotted on maps for each of the three periods, using digitised cartographic methodology of the kind used by Fabio Pruneri and Angelo Bianchi in their study of educational reform in Italy.¹⁰⁹ Marsden's work provided models for maps placing each school in its local neighbourhood.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Christina Hoon, 'Meta-Synthesis of Qualitative Case Studies: An Approach to Theory Building', *Organisational Research Methods*, 16 no. 4 (2013): 522-556; Malcolm Tight, 'Case Study Research' in *The BERA/SAGE Handbook of Educational Research*, eds., Wyse et al., 376-394.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Bassey, *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), 74-80.

¹⁰⁷ Mangion, *Contested Identities*, 2008, 240-246; Paul Connolly, 'Statistical Analysis Tools', in *Research Methods and Methodologies in Education*, eds., Arthur et al., 261.

¹⁰⁸ Roy Lowe and Yoshihito Yasuhara, *The Origins of Higher Learning: Knowledge Networks and the Early Development of Universities*. (Abingdon: Taylor and Francis, 2017).

¹⁰⁹ Fabio Pruneri and Angelo Bianchi, 'Sources and interpretations: school reforms and university transformations and their function in Italy from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries', *History of Education* 39, no. 1 (2010): 115-136.

¹¹⁰ Marsden, *Educating the Respectable*.

There was also a two-fold question of translation to address Bassey's case study criteria that, 'the situation has to be described in language which is employed by those being researched into.'¹¹¹ Cabrini wrote as an Italian and a Catholic of the nineteenth century. The 'Italian' 'Catholic' and 'nineteenth century' all needed translation. Caution has been exercised in the use of English translations of sources written in Italian. They have often been produced to be accessible for the general reader. This highlights the need to use Italian originals to be sure of the author's meaning. As a result translations are intentionally quite literal.¹¹² Some words do not translate easily. '*Amorevolezza*', literally 'lovingness' is not used in English. Online searches show that it can be translated as 'loving kindness'. The 1901 London play script uses the term 'loving care' and this has therefore been adopted as the translation throughout. The term '*academie*', not in contemporary use in Italy, also provided a challenge. The term 'performance' was chosen after consideration of Maria Barbagallo's explanation of the term in the Italian original of her 2013 edited collection of documents relating to Cabrini's pedagogy.¹¹³ The second challenge has been to articulate textual references to the Catholic faith in order to communicate the meanings Cabrini intended, as discussed earlier in relation to the work of Quentin Skinner.¹¹⁴ In her seminal work identifying the 'mission' of the nuns as different from the secular purpose of education, Deidre Raftery highlighted the challenge posed by the contemporary lack of religious literacy.¹¹⁵ She identifies a

¹¹¹ Michael Bassey, *Case Study Research*, 42.

¹¹² The Institute of Education's links with the University of Sassari have been helpful.

¹¹³ Barbagallo, '*Buoni Cristiani*', 71.

¹¹⁴ Tully, ed., *Meaning and Context*.

¹¹⁵ Deirdre Raftery, 'The "mission" of the nuns in female education in Ireland, c. 1850-1950'. *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no.2 (2012): 299-313.

need for scholars to 'engage in an act of translation' as they work with sources in a language 'no longer widely understood'.¹¹⁶ Catholic education, as Stephen McKinney has pointed out, 'draws explicitly from the philosophy and theology of Catholic Christianity'.¹¹⁷ Catholic philosophy and theology have, therefore, been used in this research to provide a 'lens of faith', to explain aspects of the Catholic faith in the way that a feminist historian might use feminist theory. For example, Servais Pinckaers' account of two traditions of Catholic morality, a 'morality of happiness' and a 'morality of obligation, have been used in analysing moral education and formation'.¹¹⁸ Sources are examined for references to growth in virtue, as well as obeying rules. This should have avoided anachronisms and contributed to a multiple case study which 'offers understanding from another horizon of meaning but is understood from our own'.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 313.

¹¹⁷ McKinney, *'Catholic Education'*, 23.

¹¹⁸ Pinckaers, *Morality: The Catholic View*.

¹¹⁹ Thomas, 'The Case: Generalisation, Theory and Phronesis', 32.

Chapter 4: Provision across Nine Nations 1880-1917

Introduction

This chapter sets out the context of the three case studies across nine nations, over 37 years. It provides a new and original study of the scope of MSC educational provision, 1880-1917, giving the clearest and fullest overview available. This context frames consideration of the research questions. Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice is considered in relation to the choices she made in accessing and selecting opportunities for foundations. Implementation of her practice is considered in terms of establishing the conditions for her practice and managing the quantity, range and geographical spread of the educational provision. Limitations, difficulties and failures are identified. Findings contribute to evaluating the coherence of her understanding of educational practice.

A range of primary sources have been used. The biography by De Maria, along with reports to the authorities, identified most houses. Letters in the published *Epistolario* have provided new information. My thanks are due to Sister Giuditta Pala MSC, archivist at the MSC General Archive, for her assistance in checking details. Quantitative and geographical data from the entire period is displayed in maps and tables in this introduction. Each of the three sections which follow examines a period of mobilisation. They are: the Italian, including Rome (1880-March 1888); the Transatlantic, including New Orleans (April 1889-1895) and the Global, including London (1896-1917). The Italian Phase included preparation for

transnational mobilisation. Two phases are identified in the Global Phase: continued expansion (1896-1905) and consolidation (1906-1917). Again, maps and tables are used to display the data.

4.1 MSC Foundations 1880-1917: An Overview

Map 1, on page 110, shows the locations of 70 foundations established in Cabrini's lifetime. The first was in Codogno in 1880 and the last in Park Ridge, Illinois in 1917, a year before her death. Some locations had two or more houses. Expansion was in both westerly and southerly directions: west to and across the United States and Europe; south to Rome in Italy; south from the United States to Central and then South America. Clusters of houses are evident on the map. Cabrini did not wish houses to be isolated from each other. Established houses supported start-ups. Solidarity within the organisation was important to maintaining MSC independence. Almost all of the foundations were in urban areas.

Table 1, on page 110, shows the 70 MSC foundations established between 1880 and 1917 by region and period of mobilisation. By 1917 there were a similar number of foundations in both Europe and the Americas, 34 and 36 respectively. Of the 34 European foundations, 25 were in Italy. Nine of the foundations transferred to other sites.

Map1: MSC Foundations Established 1880-1917



Finlay Wojtan, using OpenStreetMap[®]

Table 1: Houses Established 1880-1917

	En, Fr, Sp	Italy	USA	C. America	S. America	Total	Notes
1880-1888	-	9	-	-	-	9	(2t)
1889-1895	-	5	6	2	-	13	(4t)
1896-1917	9	11	21	0	7	48	(3t)
Total	9	25	27	2	7	70	(9t)

Key En-England, Fr-France, Sp-Spain, t=transfer

Some indication of the numbers benefiting from MSC educational provision each year in the early twentieth century was given in a 1907 report to the Holy See and is shown in Table 2 on page 111. The totals do

not represent individuals as some may have benefitted from more than one kind of provision. At that point there were 698 sisters.

Table 2: Numbers Educated in 1907

Provision	Amount
School	8590
Oratories/Confraternities	5150
Religious Instruction	18070
First Communion	4495
Total	36305

Source: 'Relazione 1907', AG.

Networks, Authorities and Needs

Local bishops and civil authorities sometimes took the initiative to invite the sisters to establish schools. Many invitations, however, resulted from MSC network relations. The network interactions were additional to the usual working relationships between organisations within the Catholic Church. Network contacts included members of other religious institutes and families of sisters and pupils, as well as contacts belonging to networks of aristocratic and professional women. Cabrini always gained permission from the authorities when establishing new foundations. Catholic foundations required the authorisation of the local bishop. Authorisation of the civil authorities was also required. Permission from the Holy See was only necessary for foundations in Protestant countries, including the United States and England. Until 1908, they came under the jurisdiction of the *Propaganda Fide*, usually referred to as 'the Propaganda'. Valuable introductions and support were provided by papal nuncios and apostolic delegates. The former represented the Holy See in Catholic countries and the latter in countries with no diplomatic relations

with the Vatican, such as the United States.¹ These network relationships were reciprocal. Cabrini assisted the Holy See on the periphery. In Rome, the MSC gave hospitality to members of the hierarchy, clergy and benefactors from elsewhere in Italy and abroad. This in turn strengthened the network and contributed to maintaining the MSC as an independent organisation.

In Europe and the Americas the authorities struggled to implement requirements of national legislation for free elementary education. Internal and transnational migration contributed to increased demand. Most MSC pupils came from migrant families. Statutory requirements also generated a demand for teachers. Young women went as educational migrants to study for qualifications in urban areas. Their need for safe accommodation led the MSC to establish residences for them. The MSC also moved into administering hospitals and dispensaries.

Table 3, on page 113, shows the range of work established. This includes schools and school-related work as well as other work, such as hospitals. Several kinds of work took place in some houses. Works which would be difficult to quantify such as formal and informal community education in parishes, homes and workplaces are not included. There were a total of 109 separate facilities.

¹ There were no diplomatic relations between the US and the Holy See between 1867 and 1984.

Table 3: Range of Work 1880-1917

Schools and School-related Work	Number
Free Schools	16
Nurseries	8
Orphanages	17
Day Schools	14
Colleges for day pupils and boarders	20
Student Residences	9
Holiday Homes	5
Novitiates	3
Total	92

Other work	Number
Hospitals	6
Nursing School	1
Residences (Two for ladies and a retirement home)	3
Churches	4
Mother houses	2
Farm	1
Total other work	17
Total Facilities	109

Table 4: Range of work 1880-1917 by periods of expansion

Dates	F	N	O	S	C	SR	HH	No	Ot	H	Re	Ch	MH	Total
1880-88	4	4	2	-	5	4	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	22
1889-95	4	3	3	-	4	3	1	1	-	2	-	1	-	22
1896-1917	8	1	12	14	11	2	4	1	2	3	3	3	1	65
Total	16	8	17	14	20	9	5	3	2	6	3	4	2	109

Key: C- College, Ch - church, F - Free School, H - Hospital HH - Holiday Home, MH - Mother House, N - Nursery, No – Novitiate, O - Orphanage, Ot – Other (Nursing school and Farm) Re - Residence, S -Day School, SR - Student Residence.

Table 4, on page 113, shows the range of work in each period of mobilisation. Almost all of the types of educational works undertaken in the entire period 1880-1917 were already being carried out during the first eight years in the Italian Period. The exceptions were separate fee-paying day schools, holiday homes and nursing schools.

Educational Provision in Schools

In the Rule of 1881, Cabrini stated that the primary work of the new Institute would be the provision of schools of all kinds for girls of all ages and social backgrounds, and when funds allowed, orphanages.² This full range was established by 1882. Free schools provided elementary education, which will be explored in the Rome and New Orleans case studies. Orphanage schools provided elementary and vocational education, as will be shown in the New Orleans case study. The college (*Collegio*), a fee-paying school, accepted both day scholars and boarders. It provided a broader curriculum to secondary level. Many optional, extra-curricular activities, referred to as 'Extras', were also offered. These provided extra income. Both Rome and London had a college. Two elite, international schools were also established; one in Rosario di Santa Fe, Argentina (1901), the other in London (1910). Nurseries were also opened. They were usually fee-paying and another source of income, as seen in Rome. Cabrini saw the student residence (*convitto*) as providing additional opportunities for education and formation. She devoted a short chapter of the 1881 Rule to them. The Italian term for boarders, '*educande*', was used by the MSC for both wealthy fee-paying boarders and orphans. This was evident in the New Orleans study.

² 'Regole dell'Istituto', 2.

Cabrini considered outside recreation an important part of school provision. It was often difficult to provide, due to restricted facilities. Outside play space was acquired as soon as possible. To this end some schools closed as work was transferred to campus sites. These included West Park, New York (1890) and Honor Oak, London (1910). Holiday homes were also established for sisters, orphans and boarders in Italy, the United States and England. They provided additional educational opportunities, as well as contributing to physical well-being. Sites with grounds also reduced the financial hardship, enabling the sisters to have small holdings and keep livestock. Many, like Cabrini, had grown up on farms. In 1917 she bought a farm in Park Ridge Illinois, close to Des Plaines to supply milk and food for the patients in the MSC hospital in Chicago.

The 1881 Rule made no reference to educating boys, students of higher education or nurses. It did, however, allow for additional work 'not in contradiction to the Constitutions'.³ Three to six year old boys were taken in the Rome nursery. In New Orleans they attended for all years of elementary education. Residences were established for students of higher education in Rome (1889), Milan (1884), Genoa (1895) and Mercedes de San Luiz, Argentina (1901). By the early twentieth century the sisters had a number of hospitals in the United States. A nursing school was established in Chicago in 1903.

Educational Provision in the Community

Cabrini's broad understanding of community education is evident in the 1881 Rule. She referred specifically to the use of MSC facilities for courses

³ Regole dell'Istituto, 2.

of Spiritual Exercises, confraternities and festive oratories. She had organised these activities whilst superior at the House of Providence. She envisaged contributing to teaching Christian Doctrine through sacramental preparation in parishes. She also referred to new approaches. In the chapter on Christian Doctrine she wrote, 'The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus should consecrate themselves with truly open minds to the religious culture of the future'.⁴ Always orthodox in her faith, this was not a reference to embracing the Modernism of her time, condemned by the Church.⁵ She had in mind the needs of those who did not know the love of Christ in anti-clerical Italy and the foreign missions. It reflects her awareness of the need to find, what Sir Fred Clarke termed, 'new applications of ancient principles'.⁶ It also indicates a progressive attitude to education in terms of being open to new opportunities.

The sisters contributed to religious education and formation in the parishes in which they lived, as well as those nearby. Unusually for women, however, they established and administered parishes as well. These were in New Orleans (1892), Rome (1902) and Seattle (1903). In the United States they also travelled to Italian communities in rural areas. These areas had no parish priest and the sisters provided religious education. The parish work included teaching Christian Doctrine, sacramental preparation and organising the Spiritual Exercises for young people and older women. They also established confraternities, in particular the Daughters of Mary which was considered good

⁴ Regole dell'Istituto, 28.

⁵ Treccani, *Enciclopedia*, 'modernismo (piu precisamente m. cattolico)'.
http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/modernismo_%28Dizionario-di-filosofia%29/ (accessed 31/05/2015)

⁶ Clarke, *Education and Social Change*, 2.

preparation for teenage girls considering religious life, as well as those who would contribute to the Church as lay women.⁷ They set up *la Congregazione delle Madri Salvatrici della Religione* for mothers. Cabrini had identified the importance of provision for mothers in the original Rule, describing them as the 'co-workers' of her missionary sisters.⁸ Sisters also gave sewing classes to girls and young women in parish halls. These were used as opportunities to explain the Catholic faith.

There was also much informal education on matters including citizenship, health and religion, as the sisters visited the parishioners in their homes. Hospital work provided opportunities for informal education of patients as did visits to Italians in the coal mines, docks and prisons. Similar opportunities presented themselves with the establishment of a retirement home in San Raffaele Cimena, Turin (1900) and residences for ladies in Paris (1898) and London (1910). The community educational work is not presented in tables as it cannot be quantified in the same way as the formal work.

Provision for the Education and Formation of Sisters

Three novitiates to provide for initial education and formation of sisters were established. These were in Codogno (1880), West Park, New York (1890) and Rome (1898). These houses were also used as a base for ongoing education and formation of sisters working in other houses who visited to participate in the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola. The student residences also contributed to initial education and formation. A

⁷ See for example, John Marmion, 'Cornelia Connelly's Work in Education'; O'Donoghue, '*Come follow me and forsake temptation*'.

⁸ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 30.

number of students from the residences entered the Institute having experienced the MSC lived tradition. Sisters went to external providers for formal education and training courses, as will be evident in the case studies. Novices who entered outside of Italy went to work in Italy as teachers of their native tongue as early as 1889.

4.2 The Italian Phase, 1880-1888: Foundation, Expansion in Italy and Preparation for Transatlantic Mobilisation

Map 2, below, shows the geographical location of the foundations of the Italian Phase. Between 1880 and 1888 nine houses were opened in five dioceses, in northern Italy and Rome. Of the eight in the north of Italy, three were clustered around Codogno. Three were established in Milan. The third brought the work together on one site closing the other two.

Map 2: Mobilisation 1880-1888: The Italian Phase



Wojtan, Finlay using OpenStreetMap

Table 5: School and School-related Provision Established 1880-1888

9 houses in Italy, 2 transfers

Table 5: Provision Established 1880-88

Date	Place	Type of Facility								Total	Diocese
		F	N	O	S	C	SR	HH	Ch		
1880	Codogno	-	-	O	-	C	-	-	-	2	Lodi
1882	Grumello	F	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	Cremona
1884	Milan	-	-	-	-	C	SR	-	-	2	Milan
1885	Casalpusterlengo	F	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	Milan
1885	B Lodigiano	F	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	Milan
1886	Milan (t)	-	-	-	-	-	SR	-	-	1	Milan
1887	Milan (t)	-	-	-	-	C	SR	-	-	2	Milan
1887	Roma	F	N	-	-	C	SR	-	-	4	Rome
1888	C S Giovanni	-	-	O	-	C		-	-	2	Piacenza
Total		4	4	2	-	5	4	-	-	19	
Other Facilities: 1 Hospital, 1 Novitiate, 1 Mother House									Total	22	

Key: C- College, Ch - church, F - Free School, HH - Holiday Home, N - Nursery, O - Orphanage, S - Day School, SR - Student Residence, (t) - transfer.

Table 5, above, shows the five school and school-related types of provision established in Italy between 1880 and 1888. There were 19 separate facilities. In addition to these, there was the Mother House, the administrative centre of the Institute, a novitiate in Codogno and a hospital in Castel San Giovanni. This brings the total number of facilities established to 22.

4.2.1 Foundation and Expansion in Italy

Authorities, Networks and Needs

The houses in northern Italy were founded in response to requests from priests who knew the sisters, supported by their bishop. The range of educational provision established in these early years reflects the needs

and concerns of the Church and State, as well as the opportunities arising from social mobility in northern Italy. The Casati Law of 1859 required local communes to ensure elementary education provision for all in the newly united Italy. The demand for school places increased with the passing of Coppino Law in 1877. This extended the requirement for schooling from two to four years, raising the school leaving age to nine. The social mobility of Northern Italy also created a demand for fee-paying colleges for girls. The MSC, like many other Catholic religious institutes, used these fees to fund free schools and orphanages. The first foundation, in Codogno (1880), was an orphanage and free school funded by a fee-paying college. Details of other schools are shown in Table 5 on page 119. Within Catholic circles during the nineteenth century nursery education was promoted as it was considered important to affective development.⁹ These were usually fee-paying. Cabrini established nurseries in Grumello (1882), Casalpusterlengo (1885) and Borgetto Lodigiano (1885). The majority of pupils in northern Italy were from the location or from families who had migrated from surrounding rural areas.

The professionalization of teaching also had an impact. All teachers were required to gain their *patente* from government institutions. Consequently there was a demand for Catholic student residences in urban centres. Cabrini saw establishing one in Milan as a way to recruit qualified teachers. Although the Italian government sought to wrest control from the church, local communes struggled to provide both schools and social care. The sisters established good relationships with their local civic

⁹ Luciano Pazzaglia, 'Asili, Chiesa e Mondo Cattolico nell'Italia dell'800' in *Scuola*, eds. Pazzaglia and Sani.

authorities. They accepted an invitation from the Commune of Castel San Giovanni to administer their hospital (1888).

Moving outside of northern Italy proved a challenge. Members of the local clergy and hierarchy discouraged Cabrini from going to Rome to seek formal approval for the Institute. This approval, the *Decreto di Lode*, was a prerequisite to working abroad. Some prelates who had previously supported her, such as Monsignor Serrati, the parish priest of Codogno and Archbishop Calabiana of Milan, considered that she would be out of her depth. The Institute expanded outside of northern Italy in 1887 with the help of other Catholic religious institutes. Cabrini's membership of the Third Order of St Francis led to hospitality in Rome.¹⁰ The Superior General of the Franciscans, Bernadino da Portogruaro, arranged for Cabrini and Mother Serafina Thommasi MSC to stay with the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. Padre Paolo Biolchini SJ, who had given the 1886 Spiritual Exercises in Codogno, encouraged her. He also provided an introduction to Padre Angelici, SJ at the *Gesù*, who became a trusted adviser.¹¹ Cabrini introduced herself to the Dominicans, at Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. Father Tommaso Granello OP, who worked at the Holy Office, which dealt with the *Decreto di Lode*, became a supporter.

Lucido Maria Cardinal Parocchi, Vicar General and Regent at the Pontifical Commission for Schools, however, told her to return to Codogno. When she provided documentation, including some *Patente* and references from

¹⁰ It was one of a number of Catholic lay movements established by congregations for lay people who lived in the world. Members attended meetings and retreats, prayed and carried out charitable works in keeping with the spirit of the order. A number of the foundresses of Italian Catholic lay movements for women referred to by Helena Dawes, were members of a third order, see Helena Dawes, *Catholic Women's Movements in Liberal and Catholic Italy*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

¹¹ Una delle Sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 68.

mayors, clergy and hierarchy in northern Italy, he gave her permission to start a free school. It opened on 1st November 1887. Pupils came from families who had migrated from other regions of Italy.

Establishing the Conditions for Practice

The MSC Mother House was opened in Codogno in 1880. Expansion did not begin until 1882. During a two year start-up Cabrini worked to establish the conditions for her educational practice. The seven co-founders had been part of the House of Providence orphanage community. Two of the seven entered at around the same time as Cabrini. The other five had entered between 1874 and 1880 when Cabrini was Assistant Superior and then Superior. She had overseen their formation. Cabrini and four of the co-founders were teachers.¹² Cabrini's priority was to establish a community way of life for the Institute, in Codogno, prior to expansion elsewhere. The MSC Rule which she completed in 1881 documented this way of life. She also specified that sisters should 'all read the Rule monthly and meditate attentively on it so that it illuminates and guides them in every circumstance.'¹³ It is not clear if sisters had access to a copy or if it was read aloud in community gatherings. There is specific guidance on the devotional life. The main focus, however, is aspiring to a life of virtue. The religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are presented as virtues. Cabrini always wanted to avoid the lack of charity and unity experienced in the House of Providence. The longest chapter of five pages is on charity. It emphasises the importance of peace and solidarity between the sisters in community calling on them to be 'of one

¹² *Epistolario* 5, note biografiche, 621-753.

¹³ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 35.

heart in God'.¹⁴ The convent community throughout this period was also the educational community as both teaching and lay sisters staffed the school. There were no lay employees.

Cabrini chose to remain superior and novice mistress at Codogno for the first eight years to transform the Rule into a lived tradition. De Maria refers to her being around the schools and sometimes calling into classes.¹⁵ In the Rule Cabrini refers to the approach of St Frances de Sales, as combining 'gentleness and strength as the Sacred Heart would want'.¹⁶ This balance was important in teacher-pupil relationships. De Maria describes an incident in Codogno in the early years, when Cabrini entered a class. A newly qualified teacher was dealing harshly with a challenging pupil. She quotes Cabrini's words to the sister: 'gentleness in speaking, correcting and assigning work with everyone.'¹⁷ Her focus on virtue, rather than obligation, is in the tradition of the Fathers of the Church and Aquinas, explored by Pinckaers.¹⁸ Cabrini also pointed out that virtue takes the middle road, for example, not taking fasting to extremes.¹⁹ It relied on sisters and pupils experiencing the love of the Heart of Christ as the co-founders had. The opening sentence of the Rule explains that: 'The most loving Heart of Jesus inflamed the souls of these virgins with the ardent fire of his charity'.²⁰ In Italy, however, the Coppino Law of 1877 had abandoned dependence on Catholic moral teaching as the main means of moral education in elementary schools. With reference to no particular

¹⁴ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 8.

¹⁵ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 36.

¹⁶ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 3; Maria Pia Aguadro, (Sister Giovanna, MSC), 'Madre Cabrini Maestra ed Educatrice' (Tesi di laurea, Magistero Maria SS Assunta, Rome, 1970-71).

¹⁷ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 37.

¹⁸ Pinckaers, *Morality: The Catholic View*.

¹⁹ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 18.

²⁰ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 1.

religion, it proposed a new norm, the 'duties of man'.²¹ It emphasised reason to the exclusion of feelings.

In this phase Cabrini commenced her practice of using letters to the sisters to explain some of her educational ideas. One, written in July 1882, from Treviglio is a good example. She had accompanied postulants to sit examinations there. She wrote of discussions on moral education with the director of the centre.²² She used a capital letter to refer to the examination in '*Morale e diritti e doveri*' or 'Morals and rights and duties' to denote her understanding that morality is God given. She wrote that the director 'wants us to say: *morale e diritti-doveri*'.²³ It is also the first of many letters where she modelled entering into dialogue with those who thought differently. Like Aquinas, she presented their arguments too.

De Maria pointed out that she remained as novice mistress and superior until 1888, to 'mould and train those who were to become the sustaining pillars of the new Institute'.²⁴ Three other co-founders played key roles. Mother Agostina Moscheni was bursar of the Institute. She inaugurated the practice of mission rooms where resources were put aside for new foundations.²⁵ Mother Gesuina Passerini was founding superior of the first two daughter houses, Grumello and Milan. She remained superior of Milan until she became Assistant Superior General in 1907. Under her guidance many young women from the Milan school and student

²¹ Andrea Geuna, 'Educare l'uomo, il cittadino, il patriota. L'insegnamento delle "prime nozioni dei doveri dell'uomo" nell'età della Sinistra (1872-1894)', *Rivista Storia del Cristianesimo* 9, no1 (2012): 161–181.

²² Cipolla, *Tra un'onda*, 547. These letters have been explored in Barbagallo, '*Buoni Cristiani*'.

²³ *Epistolario* 1, June 1, 1882, 61.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Epistolario* 5, 626.

residence entered the Institute. Mother Salesia Danelli took on the role of novice mistress from Cabrini in 1888. Novices began to enter the MSC in 1882 and a number went on to hold important leadership roles. Mother Maddalena Savaré, a qualified and experienced teacher, was the first. She took over from Mother Gesuina Passerini in Grumello, was founding superior of Casalpusterlengo in 1885 and Rome in 1887. A significant number of early entrants to the MSC were qualified teachers like Maddalena. Of 70 who entered between 1882 and 1888, 23 already had their *patente*.²⁶ By January 1889 the number of sisters had risen from the original eight co-founders to 145.²⁷

Limitations, Difficulties and Failure

De Maria wrote that ‘all the houses founded by Mother were exposed to tribulations, some more, some less’.²⁸ A major difficulty in this period was the acute poverty of the communities. Sisters received an income by sewing late into the night, after working long hours in the school and orphanage. Cabrini maintained good relations with her father’s first cousin, Agostino Depretis (1813-1887), a well-known representative of the Left (*Sinistra storica*) in Liberal Italy.²⁹ He became prime minister of Italy three times between 1876 and 1887. She did not however, accept help from him. In accordance with the 1868 *Non Expedit* of Pius IX, she had no involvement in Italian national politics. Cabrini also refused a role with an income offered by the bishop. De Maria explains that he asked Cabrini to

²⁶ ‘Memorie di Codogno (1880-1889)’, LA. (MC).

²⁷ 105 professed sisters and 40 novices, Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 54.

²⁸ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 235.

²⁹ The *Epistolario* contains a letter which she wrote to him in 1878. Cipolla and Canale, eds., *Epistolario* 1, March 10, 1876, 16.

‘undertake the reinstitution of several convents’ in the area.³⁰ This was due to her ‘enlightened attitude’ and ‘operative prudence’. The Codogno House Annals for 15th February 1881 record that she refused because: ‘The Institute is destined to be neither local nor diocesan but universal, embracing the whole world.’³¹

4.2.2 Preparation for Transatlantic Mobilisation in Rome

Authorities, Networks and Needs

With the support of the Father Tommaso Granello OP and his colleague at the Holy Office, Archbishop Vincenzo Leone Sallua O.P., the Holy See recognition of the MSC (*Decreto di Lode*) was granted on 12th March 1888. Whilst pursuing it between November 1887 and March 1888 Cabrini had extended her network.³² She called on the Bishop of Piacenza, Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, a few days after he had met with Leo XIII, on 14th November.³³ Scalabrini had gained Leo’s support to establish a congregation of Italian priests to go to the United States to serve Italian migrants.³⁴ Cabrini and Scalabrini met again in May 1888, during the founding of the house in Castel San Giovanni in his diocese. Scalabrini had set up his congregation, the ‘Missionaries of Saint Charles’. They became

³⁰ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 54 ; MC, 5.

³¹ MC, 7.

³² Visitors for 1887-8 listed in the Rome House Annals include four Cardinals, two bishops, six monsignors, a canon, the Superiors General of the Canons Lateran and the Franciscans and the rector of the Lombardy seminary, RR, 8.

³³ *Epistolario*, 1, December 17, 1887, 272. Don Luigi Sacchetti, a priest in Scalabrini’s diocese, who knew Cabrini, advised her to call on him to seek his help to gain the *Decreto di Lode*. See Sullivan, 39. Sullivan suggests that this would have been in the third week of November as he attended a reception in Piacenza 28 November 1887, Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 40.

³⁴ John Baptist Scalabrini, ‘From the Audience with the Holy Father, 14th November 1887’, in *For the Love of Immigrants: Migration Writings and Letters of Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini*, ed., Archbishop Silvano M Tomasi cs (New York: Centre for Migration Studies, 2000), 158.

known as ‘the Scalabrini Fathers’. He invited Cabrini to join this work.³⁵ She had many reservations about accepting. De Maria described it as ‘a mission to which she (Cabrini) did not feel called’.³⁶ Her initial response, ‘it is too small a world to limit ourselves to one place’, became well-known as the title of a best-selling biography.³⁷ It was used extensively in her hagiography. It not only reflected her retention of her childhood dream to go to China but also her concern that her independent Institute would be limited. De Maria emphasised this point.³⁸ Cabrini had until 21st November to decide.³⁹

Establishing Conditions for Practice

In seeking advice on the project between May and December 1888, she won powerful supporters who were later to prove invaluable in expansion outside of Italy. She approached the most senior members of the hierarchy at the Holy See.⁴⁰ They included Mariano Cardinal Rampolla, the Secretary of State, Giovanni Cardinal Simeoni, head of the *Propaganda Fide* and the secretary, Monsignor Domenico Jacobini. They all encouraged her, probably influenced by Leo XIII’s Encyclical on Italian migrants, *Quam Aerumnosa*. The literal translation is ‘How Wretched’.⁴¹ Published in December 1888, it was directed at the American hierarchy, who had failed to provide for the Italian migrants. It announced that Scalabrini and his Institute would undertake the ‘mission among the scattered sons of Italy’.

³⁵ On 24th May 1888, she wrote to Maddalena Savaré in Rome, ‘today the Bishop of Piacenza invited me to the Missions of New York entrusted to him’. *Epistolario*, May 24, 1888, 319.

³⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 84.

³⁷ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 79; Theodore Maynard, *Too Small a World*. (New York: MSC, 1945).

³⁸ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 84.

³⁹ *Epistolario* 1, October 23, 1888, 376.

⁴⁰ ‘Dati Biografici’, 1919 *In Memoria*, vi-vii.

⁴¹ Leo XIII, *Quam Aerumnosa*, December 10, 1888, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/l13imi.htm> (accessed 14/08/2018).

The timing worked in favour of the American mission and also gave Cabrini the advantage.

Her supporters probably facilitated the papal audience in early January 1889.⁴² Two previous requests in March and October of 1888 had been refused.⁴³ Kathleen Sprows Cummings has shown that Cabrini's status as the immigrants' saint, rather than an Italian missionary, has been the focus of her English-language historiography as well as hagiography.⁴⁴ Leo's words to Cabrini, 'not to the east but the west', have been understood as directing her to work with migrants in the United States. The Pontiff, however, also gave the practical advice that she would be likely to find financial backing in America for her new Institute. Her meeting with Leo has been presented as Cabrini waiting for him to make the decision. She had been preparing to go for several months.⁴⁵ She had arranged for sisters in Rome and Codogno to be taught English, as will be seen in the Rome case study. She sought Leo's blessing on the mission as she had so many reservations about it. She also wanted him to know her Institute. The *Propaganda Fide* funded the voyage and provided Cabrini with documents of authorisation. On 19th March 1889 the westward transnational mobilisation of the MSC began with a departure ceremony at Codogno, similar to those of the Irish congregations described by Deirdre Raftery.⁴⁶ This brought the MSC to the attention of the wider

⁴² *Epistolario* 1, January 17, 1889, 413.

⁴³ *Epistolario* 1, March 19, 1888, 293; October 1, 1888, 369-370.

⁴⁴ Kathleen Sprows Cummings, 'Frances Cabrini, American Exceptionalism, and Returning to Rome', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 104, no. 1, (2018): 1-22.

⁴⁵ *Epistolario* 1, November 9, 1888. Cabrini writes of leaving for America in less than a year.

⁴⁶ Deirdre Raftery, 'From Kerry to Katong in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds. Raftery and Smyth, 38-9.

Catholic public when it was reported in *Osservatore Romano*,⁴⁷ three days later.⁴⁸

Limitations, Difficulties and Failure

The planning for the American mission was not concrete enough for Cabrini.⁴⁹ In New York, the Countess Mary Reid Cesnola had raised funds for an Italian orphanage.⁵⁰ No details were provided. Cabrini had heard that the house in America was ready for them in January. Again she was given no details. She planned to leave Italy with her six companions on 1st May. The Propaganda arranged for them to set sail from Le Havre on 23rd March. Cabrini had major concerns. The achievements of the Italian period were being jeopardised. She had formed well-qualified teaching sisters in her understanding of Catholic educational practice and a morality of happiness. It seemed that outside of Italy the MSC would not have the independence that facilitated this. The prospects for implementing her practice across the Atlantic were not good.

4.3 The Transatlantic Phase, 1889-1895: Foundations in the Americas including New Orleans, further expansion in Italy and maintaining an independent female institute

Map 3, on page 130, shows the locations of the houses founded between 1889 and 1895. Some locations had two or more houses. 13 houses were established between April 1889 and 1895. Six were in the USA, two in

⁴⁷ *Osservatore Romano* is the newspaper of the Vatican.

⁴⁸ Cited in Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 57.

⁴⁹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 84.

⁵⁰ Cesnola was an American heiress, married to the Italian-born Director of the Museum of Modern Art.

Central America and five in Italy. There was a new cluster in and around New York City. Cabrini was concerned that Nicaragua was isolated and this contributed to her decision to found a house in New Orleans.⁵¹ It provided a base between New York and Granada. In Italy Genoa was a port of embarkation for Atlantic sailings.

Map 3: Mobilisation 1889-1895: The Transatlantic Phase



Finlay Wojtan, using OpenStreetMap[®]

Table 6, on page 132, shows the range of school and school-related provision established in this phase. In addition there were two hospitals and a novitiate established. This brings the total

⁵¹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 139.

number of facilities established to 22, the same as the Italian Phase. The range of work continued. There is one new kind of work, the administration of a parish for Italian immigrants in New Orleans (1892). The MSC entered another five dioceses. The rate of expansion appears to double in this period but four houses were transferred, with four closures, leaving a total of 18 in 1895 as the sisters left Granda.

Authorities, Networks and Needs

This was a period of transition to establish the MSC as a female missionary institute, working independently abroad. Cabrini and six sisters arrived in New York on 31st March 1889. Her concerns regarding lack of planning and the threat to MSC independence proved justified. The Scalabrini Fathers had not organised a house for the sisters.⁵² The co-founders received hospitality and advice from the Sisters of Charity. Archbishop Michael Corrigan of New York was not confident that the Countess Cesnola's orphanage would be sustainable. Corrigan suggested to Cabrini that she and her companions should return to Italy. Her companion recorded that Cabrini responded by producing the documents from the Propaganda Fide and 'reminding the archbishop that she had been sent to America by Rome and would therefore remain.'⁵³ The documents had been prepared by Giacomo Della Chiesa, the future Benedict XV, who was already a supporter. The companion

⁵² The Scalabrinian Father Felice had offered accommodation described by Archbishop Michael Corrigan of New York in a letter to Scalabrini as 'Two holes with low ceilings, dirty very narrow and barely sufficient for two persons instead of five', 'Corrigan to Scalabrini', in *For the Love of Immigrants*, ed., Tomasi, 258.

⁵³ MSC, 'Memorie New York', cited in Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 79.

Table 6: School and School-related Provision Established 1889-1895**13 houses: 5 in Italy, 6 in the USA, 2 in Central America, 4 transfers**

Date	Place	Type of Facility								Total	Diocese
		F	N	O	S	C	SR	HH	Ch		
1889	New York	F	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	2	New York
1889	Rome (t)	-	-	-	-	-	SR	-	-	1	Rome
1889	Aspra	-	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	Rome
1890	West Park (t)	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	New York
1891	Granada	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Nicaragua*
1892	New Orleans	F	-	O	-	-	-	-	Ch	3	Louisiana
1892	New York (H)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	New York
1892	Brooklyn	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	Brooklyn
1892	Montecompatri	F	N	-	-	-	-	HH	-	3	Frasati
1893	Genoa	-		-	-	C	SR	-	-	2	Genoa
1894	Rome (t)	-	N	-	-	C	SR	-	-	3	Roma
1895	New York (Ht)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	New York
1895	Panama	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Panama
Total		4	3	3	0	4	3	1	1	19	
Other Facilities		2 Hospitals, 1 novitiate						Total		22	

Key: C- College, Ch - church, F - Free School, H - Hospital, HH - Holiday Home, Ht – Hospital transfer, N - Nursery, O - Orphanage, Res - Residence, S - Day School, SR - Student Residence, t - transfer.

*Nicaragua closed in 1894.

sister also noted that ‘the archbishop grew red in the face’.⁵⁴ This was the first of many encounters when she became involved in the sensitive power relations between Rome and the local hierarchy. Her ability to negotiate these was important in maintaining the independence of her Institute. Corrigan did not regard the MSC as an independent organisation. Writing to Scalabrini the following month, he observed that the MSC would become ‘effective auxiliaries’.⁵⁵ This was a more common situation for Italian sisters abroad, as Maria Susanna Garroni, has shown, in her work on the Pallottini Sisters.⁵⁶

In maintaining MSC independence in the Americas, Cabrini was assisted by members of the Society of Jesus, as she had been in Italy. John McGreevy has demonstrated in *American Jesuits and the World*, that the nineteenth century revival of the Society of Jesus made modern Catholicism global.⁵⁷ Support for Institutes of Catholic women religious was part of that process. Cabrini had a letter of introduction to Fr Philippe Cardella SJ, a member of the Society in New York. In 1890 he introduced her to Doña Elena Arellano, who wished to work with Catholic women religious to establish an academy in Granada, Nicaragua.⁵⁸ In Central America, as in northern Italy, there was a demand for convent schools for daughters of wealthier families and the fees would provide an income. The Holy See supported the venture. The college for day scholars and boarders opened in December 1891.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Corrigan to Scalabrini May 8, 1889, in *For the Love of Immigrants*, ed., Thomasi, 258.

⁵⁶ Maria Susanna Garroni, ‘Genere e transnazionalismo: una congregazione italiana negli Stati Uniti, 1889-1935’ in *Sorelle d’oltreoceano*, ed. Garroni. They arrived in New York to work with the Pallottini Fathers at the same time as the MSC.

⁵⁷ John McGreevy, *American Jesuits and the World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

⁵⁸ *Epistolario* 1, June 23, 1889, 462.

Cabrini was not invited to New Orleans. She read of the lynching of eleven Italians in the city in 1891. Her return journey from Nicaragua provided the opportunity to make a scouting visit, in April 1892. Father Giacomo Gambera, a Scalabrinian Father, introduced her to Archbishop Francis Jansens. She accepted his invitation to establish a free school and orphanage for Italian migrants later that year. The first Columbus Hospital was also established in New York (1892). Increased demand and Cabrini's concern to provide the best facilities for both rich and poor led to the transfer of the New York orphanage to a large campus in West Park (1890) on the outskirts of the city after only a year. Similarly Columbus Hospital transferred to the newly acquired Post-Graduate Hospital of New York (1895) after three years.

Back in Italy, provision in Rome expanded. A residence for students of higher education was established in 1889 and transferred in 1894. The sisters provided Catholic educational programmes, to supplement those offered in the secular institutions attended by the students. These are discussed in some detail in the Rome study, as Cabrini considered it the most important of all the work of the Institute. The first dedicated holiday home was established in Montecompatri (1892) for the sisters and boarders from Rome. The sisters also agreed to a request from the local commune there to take on the administration of their nursery and free school. In 1893 Cabrini accepted an invitation from the Bishop of Genoa. The port was an ideal location for the sisters' many Atlantic crossings which followed. A residence for teaching students and a fee-paying boarding and day school opened there in 1895.

Establishing the Conditions for Practice

Virtues were the most important criteria when selecting the six New York co-founders. Cabrini had written to the community in Codogno that 'these countries want souls proven in virtue, courageous souls who know how to do everything with the most Sacred Heart of Jesus'.⁵⁹ She called on them to develop 'masculine (*maschi*) virtues' for difficult occasions, referring specifically to being 'strong and of robust spirit'.⁶⁰ Cabrini left New York after four months, handing over to Mother Bernardina Vallsineri. Bernardina had entered in 1884 and gained a university degree in 1888. She had worked in Milan with Mother Gesuina Passerini and was founding superior of Castelsangiovanni. Another co-founder was Mother Serafina Thomasi who also entered in 1884. She too was well-educated. A linguist who studied in Germany, she had been a co-founder in Rome in 1887 and had taught the sisters English in preparation for work in the United States. The co-founders soon registered for American citizenship, as did others who followed them to the United States.

Cabrini realised the importance of teaching English to the sisters in Italy. Two postulants returned to Codogno with her, the New Yorker, Elizabeth Desmond, and Irish American, Mary Nolan. Sadly, Mary died the following year. Elizabeth remained in Codogno, as Mother Stanislao, teaching English to pupils and sisters. During this period sisters in Italy also began to learn Spanish in preparation for working in Nicaragua. Many more sisters travelled from Italy to work in the Americas. 29 arrived in 1891 and 15 in 1894. Two founding superiors

⁵⁹ *Epistolario* 1, December 10, 1888, 393.

⁶⁰ *Epistolario* 1, December 10, 1888, 393-4.

arrived in 1891, Mother Cherubina Ciceri and Mother Domenica Biancchi. Like Mother Bernardina Vallsineri, they had been students in Milan with Mother Gesuina Passerini. Both were qualified teachers. Mother Chrubina became the founding superior in Nicaragua in 1891 and Mother Domenica in New Orleans in 1892. A mission room was set up in New York, as in Codogno, to gather resources for new missions.⁶¹ In the United States the Institute began to develop as a multi-national community. Young women entered during the first months in New York. An American novitiate was purchased outside of the city at West Park in 1890. 21 took the habit there the following year.⁶² Italian and Irish Americans entered as did some young women from Central America.

In their work the sisters crossed some of 'Italy's many Diasporas', referred to by Donna Giabaccia. Her work has shown that Italian migrants settled with others from their area of origin and social class producing Italy's many Diasporas, which reflected the divisions in Italy.⁶³ This was also the case in the Church. Corrigan wrote of the North-South Italian divide: 'I don't know how to resolve the difficulties existing between the northern and southern Italians.'⁶⁴ In the American Church, the migrants came predominantly from Southern Italy. They were referred to as 'the Italian problem' and regarded as a 'dangerous element'.⁶⁵ They were considered to be in need of civilizing. The sisters' attitude was different. They talked

⁶¹ *Epistolario* 2, July 24 1895, 538.

⁶² *Epistolario* 2, May 15, 1891, 26.

⁶³ Donna R Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: UCL Press, 2000).

⁶⁴ 'Corrigan to Scalabrini', May 8, 1889 in *For the Love of Immigrants*, ed., Tomasi, 259.

⁶⁵ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 46, 156.

of ‘the poor abandoned Italian immigrants’.⁶⁶ The sisters who migrated from Italy were from the North. Their pupils and their families were from the South. The Italian Americans who entered the MSC were from the South. Sullivan’s research indicates that the solidarity between sisters referred to in the 1881 Rule was evident in the mixed convent communities.⁶⁷ The New Orleans study shows how the southern Italian migrant community welcomed the sisters.

Whilst Mothers Bernardina, Cherubina and Domenica experienced transnational careers other equally significant immobile players took on key roles in Italy. Cabrini wanted to assess mission opportunities herself to consider whether the conditions to support her practice could be put in place. She was well-organised with a spare habit in every house, a travel kit including travel cutlery, and a *libretto* or book of letters of recommendations. To facilitate her transnational mobility, Cabrini delegated more to Mother Gesuina Passerini in Milan and Mother Maddalena Savaré in Rome. In 1892, following the death of Mother Salesia, Mother Maddalena became Novice Mistress and superior in Codogno. She was replaced in Rome by another of Gesuina’s Passineri’s students, Mother Gesuina Diotti. All three represented Cabrini with civil and religious authorities.

Cabrini’s ability to communicate from the periphery strengthened relationships she had established with the Holy See. In 1891, Cardinal Rampolla asked her to gather intelligence for the Holy See on her journey from Nicaragua back to New York in 1892. She visited the Mosquito

⁶⁶ Ibid., 46, 156.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Kingdom, a coastal area on the border of Nicaragua and Honduras, to investigate the situation there on his behalf.⁶⁸ Her contacts in Rome also put her in a strong position with the American hierarchy. In June 1892 Archbishop Corrigan of New York asked her not to represent the views of some American bishops, who wished to agree to government funding for parish schools, with the Propaganda and Rampolla.⁶⁹ In October Cabrini wrote to Mother Bernardina Vallisineri in New York of the 'special cordiality' with which Cardinals in Rome received her giving the opportunity to discuss the matter:

They were desirous of news so I was able to speak very freely about everything and warmly of the affairs of the Archbishop (Corrigan).⁷⁰

She went on to say how Rampolla and the other Cardinals told her they were supportive of Corrigan and held him in high esteem. She asked Mother Bernadina to see Corrigan to pass this on. She was also to see the Apostolic delegate, Cardinal Satolli, who Cabrini met on her first visit to New York in 1889. Cabrini also kept the sisters, clergy, benefactors and the authorities informed of the expanding work of the Institute through her Travel Letters. Capitalising on the contemporary interest in exotic travel they brought her work to the attention of a wider public. The seventh, written in 1895, described her journey across the Andes and along the Pacific from Panama to Buenos Aires. It was published as a pamphlet on her return.⁷¹

⁶⁸ The area was inhabited by the indigenous Mosquito people but annexed by Nicaragua in 1894.

⁶⁹ *Epistolario* 2, June 24, 1892, 158.

⁷⁰ *Epistolario* 2, October, 1892, 208.

⁷¹ 'Da Panama a Buenos Aires per il Pacifico ed attraverso la Cordigliera', in *Tra Un'onda*, 251-324. Available in the original pamphlet form in CR.

Limitations, Difficulties and Failure

Two houses closed in this period, Aspra, Italy and Granada, Nicaragua. A nursery in Aspra, to the North East of Rome received diocesan funding of 400 lire per annum.⁷² It was also used for holidays by those in Rome. Cabrini closed it due to lack of spiritual support. The anti-clericalism of Europe was reproduced in the Americas. In 1894 the sisters were expelled from Nicaragua. As they passed through Panama they accepted an invitation from the bishop to stay and establish a college (1895). It is evident that when Cabrini visited in 1895 she still had a mission in the East in mind. She wrote to Monsignor Rota that as she looked out on the Pacific she thought of Australia, China and Japan on the horizon and of all the work needed in those countries.⁷³

Although they received hospitality and resources from other congregations, Sullivan has shown that in the United States they also experienced discrimination from them. Acute poverty was a feature of the start-ups in New York and New Orleans. When sisters visited the Italian consulate in New York in 1889 the staff had no interest in religious projects. The wealthier members of the Italian colony supported the projects of the Freemasons. Cabrini was invited to administer their hospital in New York.⁷⁴ She refused. The sisters were prepared to endure financial hardship to ensure that their educational practice was Catholic. She had planned to move south from Panama to Brazil in response to

⁷² Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 72.

⁷³ *Epistolario* 2, June 12, 1895, 522.

⁷⁴ D'Agostino refers to her being 'proudly intransigent' and refusing as the revenue came from the proceeds of the 20th September Parade held to celebrate the fall of Rome which resulted in the pope remaining a prisoner in the Vatican. Seen in the context of her other decisions it is clear that she refused any offer which did not allow her sisters to work independently. Peter D'Agostino, *Rome in America*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 58.

invitations. Sisters were learning Portuguese. She realised, however, that they would find the climate harder than that of Argentina.⁷⁵ They were told to stop Portuguese lessons and learn Spanish.⁷⁶ She had to decline many invitations from bishops during this period. In 1891 she was invited to Boston.⁷⁷ The same year, on the journey to Nicaragua the Bishop of Costa Rica asked her to found a house there. Travelling from New Orleans to New York in 1892 she was invited to open houses in towns with large populations of Italian migrants, including Cincinnati, Pittsburg and Buffalo.⁷⁸ In a letter to her brother she referred to having so many requests that she asked Leo which she should accept. The Pontiff replied smiling, 'I know that you work hard, so I give you the freedom to go where you wish'.⁷⁹ Rampolla told her to found houses in every country in South America.⁸⁰ A new foundation required at least six sisters.⁸¹ The group needed the skills necessary for a start-up which would establish Cabrini's educational practice as a lived tradition. There were never enough suitably qualified sisters.

4.4 The Global Phase 1896-1917: The Americas and Europe, including the London (1902) foundation, supporting the missions and moving westward

Map 4, on page 142, shows the houses opened between 1896 and Cabrini's death in 1917. In this phase houses opened in the United States mid-west in Denver and Chicago and on the Pacific coast in Seattle and Los

⁷⁵ *Epistolario* 2, September 1895, 557.

⁷⁶ *Epistolario* 2, July 24, 1895.

⁷⁷ *Epistolario* 2, May 26, 1891, 29.

⁷⁸ Cipolla ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 116; *Epistolario* 2, June 3, 1892.

⁷⁹ *Epistolario* 2, August 28, 1895.

⁸⁰ *Epistolario* 2, October 4, 1895, 561-2.

⁸¹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 72.

Angeles. Four houses were opened in between the northern Italian foundations and Rome, two more in northern Italy and two close to Rome. The Institute moved into another five nations: Argentina, Brazil, France, Spain and England. Although this is dealt with as one phase overall, the main period of expansion was 1896-1905 and a period of consolidation, 1906-1917 preceded Cabrini's death in 1917. 33 of the 48 houses were founded between 1896 and 1905. The pace of expansion was maintained with the foundation of 48 houses, 20 in Europe, 21 in the USA and 7 in South America. These moves extended MSC presence to another 21 dioceses. In this period there were three transfers and 65 new facilities established in 48 houses. There were five new kinds of work: a hospital school, 14 day schools, a farm, a residence for the retired and two for lady boarders. A number of changes were the result of the First World War. The houses opened in this period are shown in Table 7 on pages 143-4.

Map 4: Mobilisation 1896-1917: The Global Phase



Finlay Wojtan, using [OpenStreetMap](#)

Table 7: School and School-related Provision Established 1896-1917 (page 1 of 2)

48 houses: 9 in France, Spain and England, 11 in Italy, 21 in the United States and 7 in South America, 3 transfers.

Period of Expansion, 1896-1905: 33 houses

Date	Place	Type of Provision								Total	Diocese
		F	N	O	S	C	SR	HH	Ch		
1896	Buenos Aires	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Buenos Aires
1898	Paris (LR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Paris
1898	New York	3F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	New York
1898	Rome (No and MH)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Rome
1899	Chicago	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	Chicago
1899	Scranton	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	1	Pennsylvania
1899	Newark	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	1	Arlington
1899	New York	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	New York
1899	Long Beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	HH	-	1	Natchez
1899	Neuilly-sur-Marne	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	Paris
1899	Madrid	-	-	-	-	C	SR	-	-	2	Madrid
1900	Turin	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	1	Turin
1900	S.R Cimenà (RH)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Turin
1900	Città della Pieve	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	C. della Pieve
1900	Marsciano	-	N	-	S	-	-	-	-	2	Perugia
1900	Bilbao	-	-	O	S	-	-	-	-	2	Vittoria
1901	Cabalito (t)	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	B Aires
1901	Flores	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	B Aires
1901	Rosario di Santa Fe	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Santa Fe
1901	Mercedes de San Luiz	-	-	-	S	C	SR	-	-	3	San Juan
1901	Rome(t)	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	Ch	2	Rome
1902	Brockley	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Southwark
1903	Denver	-	-	-	2S	-	-	-	-	2	Denver
1903	Arlington	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	Arlington
1903	Chicago (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Chicago
1903	Seattle	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	Ch	2	Washington
1903	Sao Paulo	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Sao Paulo
1904	New Orleans (t)	2F	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	3	Louisiana
1905	Denver	-	-	O	S	-	-	-	-	2	Denver
1905	Los Angeles	-	-	O	S	-	-	-	-	2	LA
1905	Burbank	-	-	-	-	-	-	HH	-	1	LA
1905	Chicago (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	Chicago
1905	Des Plaines	-	-	-	-	-	-	HH	-	1	Chicago

Key: C- College, Ch - church, F - Free School, HH - Holiday Home, RH- Retirement Home, MH - Mother House, N - Nursery, No - Novitiate, O - Orphanage, S - Day School, SR - Student Residence, (t) - transfer.

Table 7: School and School-related Provision Established 1896-1917 (page 2 of 2)

Period of Consolidation, 1906-17: 15 Houses											
Date	Place	Type of Facility								Total	Diocese
		F	N	O	S	C	SR	HH	Ch		
1908	Rio de Janeiro	-	-	-	-	C	-	-	-	1	Rio de Janeiro
1910	London(t)(LR)	-	-	-	S	C	-	-	Ch	3	Southwark
1911	Codogno	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	1	Lodi
1912	Philadelphia	F	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	2	Philadelphia
1913	Seattle	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	Nesqually
1914	Dobbs Ferry	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	New York
1914	Noisy Le Grande	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	Paris
1915	Pontremoli	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	1	Pontremoli
1915	Okehampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	HH	-	1	Plymouth
1915	Ponte Lucano (Co)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Rome
1916	Seattle (H)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nesqually
1917	Sopelana	-	-	O	-	-	-	-	-	1	Vittoria
1917	Park Ridge (Fa)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Chicago
NR	Cerretoli (NR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Lucca
NR	Sambuci (NR)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Rome
Total		8	1	12	14	11	2	4	3	55	

Other work: 2 Ladies' Residences, 1 Retirement Home, 1 Nursing School,
 3 Hospitals, Novitiate, Mother House (t), Farm **Total 65**

Key: C- College, Ch - church, Co – Community work, F - Free School, Fa – Farm, LR – Ladies' Residence, HH - Holiday Home, MH - Mother House, N - Nursery, NR – No record, RH - Retirement Home.

Authorities, Networks and Needs

In the United States meeting the needs of poorer Italian migrants remained the priority. There were also a number of Mexican orphans in the Los Angeles orphanage (1905).⁸² Eight free schools and 12 orphanages were founded. Four of the schools were parish schools, one in Chicago (1899), two in New Orleans (1904) and one in Philadelphia (1912). The sisters agreed to administer them. Holiday homes were also provided for sisters and orphans from New Orleans (Long Beach, 1899), Los Angeles

⁸² 'Relazione 1907', 11.

(Burbank, 1905) and Chicago (Des Plaines, 1905). In 1917 Cabrini purchased a farm in Park Ridge, close to Des Plaines to supply the hospital in Chicago with milk and food. By the turn of the century, social mobility of Italian migrants in the United States created a demand for fee-paying schools. Five day schools were set up. In New York a fee-paying day and boarding school, Sacred Heart College, opened in 1899. The hospital mission also expanded significantly. A fee-paying hospital, with a training school for nurses, opened in a wealthy area by the lake in Chicago (1903). A free hospital for Italians in the city followed (1910). A third opened for the Italian community of Seattle (1916). In this period Cabrini was able to turn her attention to provision for some of the many Italians, including her brother and his family, who had migrated to Argentina in 1890. She was assisted by clergy of Italian origin. Cabrini knew Don Darrio Broggi, who worked in the office of the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, from Genoa.⁸³ Colleges were opened for daughters of more prosperous families in Buenos Aires (1896) and in Mercedes de San Luis (1901), where a residence for teaching students was also established. An international school opened in Rosario de Santa Fe (1901). The sisters also took on the administration of an Irish orphanage in Flores, Buenos Aires (1901). With the help of Father Luigi Rossi SJ they soon extended their work to Brazil, establishing a college in Sao Paulo (1903). Cabrini was not present in 1903 but visited in 1908. The President's daughter was sailing on the same ship and introduced Cabrini to her father. He assisted with the stay in Rio de Janeiro (1908), where another college was set up.

⁸³ *Epistolario* 2, August 28, 1895, 550.

Expansion in France, Spain and England was motivated by the need for native speakers to teach languages in the MSC schools in the Americas. Whilst requests from bishops continued, a number of opportunities arose as a result of family contacts and networks of women. The foundation in London (1902) resulted from family contacts. Father Serafino Banfi, an Italian priest of Southwark, arranged for Monsignor Francis Bourne (1861-1935) to visit his sister, who was an MSC sister, whilst in Italy in 1896. Cabrini told the sisters in Honor Oak in 1911 that she gave him a good lunch in Codogno and he invited her to open a school in Southwark.⁸⁴ Formal documents refer to the need for English-speaking sisters leading to the foundation in England. It is also clear in Cabrini's correspondence, as early as 1895, that she was keen to be involved in the re-conversion of England.⁸⁵ Like others in Rome at the time, she believed that many Anglicans would convert to Catholicism.⁸⁶

A powerful transnational network of women assisted in foundations in Paris, Madrid, Bilbao, London and Sao Paulo. During a scouting visit to Paris, Cabrini and her companion stayed with Madame de Mier, 'a grand Columbian lady', the sister of Eugenia, a boarder in Panama.⁸⁷ The secretary at the Papal Nunciature in Paris, Monsignor Montagnioni, introduced the Countess Mackin Spotteswood (1850-1923), an American widow.⁸⁸ She assisted the sisters in opening a ladies' residence in central Paris in 1898. She then raised funds for an Italian orphanage in Neuilly-sur-

⁸⁴ MF, 32.

⁸⁵ In 1895 Pope Leo XIII had published *Amantissima Voluntatis*, his apostolic letter calling all English people to unity with the Catholic Church, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/l13amantissima.htm> (accessed 31/05/2015). Cabrini refers to it in a Travel Letter of 1895, Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 202.

⁸⁶ The first English sister to join the MSC confirmed this. The daughter of an Anglican clergyman, she was received into the Catholic Church in Codogno in January 1898, *Epistolario* 3, January 20, 1898, 110.

⁸⁷ September 18, 1898, 178; September 3, 1898, 98. The address was: 16 Rue Pierre Charron.

⁸⁸ The Countess had converted two years before and was given her title by Leo XIII.

Marne (1899).⁸⁹ In 1921 the Countess remembered that 'Madame Cabrini interested all of Paris Society' as a result 'under the presidency of H.R.H. the Infanta Eulalie of Spain and my presidency it was easy to organise concerts and fetes that were very successful'.⁹⁰ The Infanta introduced Cabrini to her sister in law, Queen Maria Christina, who assisted in opening a college in Madrid (1899) and an orphanage and school in Bilbao (1900).⁹¹ Madame Heart, another contact from Paris, played a role in establishing a house in Brockley, London in 1902. Ortensia and Luisa Ramos, who had attended a Paris fundraising concert, assisted in opening a college in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1908.

Most properties were purchased or rented as will be seen in the case studies. The MSC move to Turin resulted from the donation of a property. Maurizia and Giulia Jaggi, two sisters who entered, donated their two family houses. In 1900 a school was opened in their house in Turin and a retirement home in their villa in San Raffaele Cimena, in the surrounding countryside.⁹² The transfer and expansion of work continued. The free school in Rome (1901), New Orleans orphanage (1904) and London School (1910) all transferred to larger sites. In 1909 St Rita's school in New York, with 600 pupils, was forced to close, as the Franciscans took over the neighbouring parish. They set up a parish school for Italians and wanted the sisters to work for them.⁹³ The sisters moved on. The use of the convent chapel as the Italian parish church in New Orleans encouraged

⁸⁹ October 10, 1898,188; October 18,1898,191; Countess Spottiswood Mackin, 'Memories of Rev Mother Francesca Saverio Cabrini, Foundress and Superior General of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who took flight to heaven in Chicago the 22nd of December 1917', March 29, 1921.(CR).

⁹⁰ Countess Spottiswood Mackin, March 29, 1921, 'Memories', 2.

⁹¹ The Queen also asked for sisters to tutor her children but Cabrini refused.

⁹² Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 228.

⁹³ 1910, 'Relazione Triennale dell' Instituto, 6.

Cabrini to build churches for parish use in Rome (1902), Seattle (1903) and London (1910).

The Great War of 1914-18 brought further changes with the admission of sons of dead or wounded soldiers to the Paris orphanage. The boys were accommodated in the orphanage in Neuilly-sur-Marne at the request of the wife of the Italian Ambassador. The girls moved to Noisy le Grande (1914). In England a building was given over to use by the Red Cross (1915) and refugee families accommodated. A military hospital opened in Milan. The First World War prevented travel from England through France to Italy. The Okehampton foundation was established in Devon (1915) to facilitate travel through Spain.

Establishing the Conditions for Practice

Educated sisters continued to enter the MSC. Ongoing education in this period featured vocational training as well as languages. In the early years of the twentieth century this included the Montessori Method, as will be seen in the Rome and London studies. Virtue continued to be a focus. As the Institute expanded so did the roles of sisters in key positions. Mother Domenica Bianchi moved from New Orleans to become the founding superior in Buenos Aires and oversaw work in South America. She moved the Institute into Brazil in 1903. The founding superior in Sao Paulo, Mother Rosario Marchesi, was another alumna from Milan. Following Domenica's departure in 1905 she undertook the oversight of the work in South America.

Whilst Cabrini personally established new foundations and major transfers in this period her commitment to subsidiarity is also evident. She delegated much of the preparation. Sisters were sent ahead as advanced parties as will be seen in New Orleans and London. In the early twentieth century she sent pairs of sisters on scouting visits to locations she had not visited. Mother Carmen Araña, a native Spanish speaker from Nicaragua, and a companion were sent to Madrid in 1899. Italian Mother Ignazia Dossena, who had been in the United States since 1890, was sent to the west. Cabrini delegated in a supportive way, as will be seen in the case studies. In Mother Ignazia's case, for example, Cabrini wrote 14 letters to her between January and April 1903. Mother Madalena's role as Novice Mistress in Codogno also evolved in this period. The number of sisters grew steadily. By 1910 the 689 of 1907 rose to 839.⁹⁴ Maddalena was charged with the operational management of deploying the sisters. Cabrini would write naming sisters to be sent to new foundations, often telling Maddalena to make the final decision. Similarly Mother Gesuina Diotti, the superior in Rome, took on more responsibility there as the Institute grew as a global organisation. She liaised with departments of the Holy See and organised letters of recommendation. Many international visitors came. Some visited the schools, as will be seen in the Rome case study.

During this phase Cabrini also continued to maintain good working relations with the authorities. She would write regularly to Mother Gesuina asking her to pass on information to Rampolla. This included details of Bishops and staff from the nunciature who helped her. She continued to have papal audiences and established good working

⁹⁴ 'Relazione Triennale' 1910.

relationships with Leo's successors, Pius X and Benedict XV. The former took over when Leo died in 1903. His private archive contains a number of personal letters from Cabrini sent as was her custom on his feast day and Christmas.⁹⁵ Pope Benedict XV, who was elected in 1914, was an old friend, as he had prepared the documentation for Cabrini to take to America in 1889.

More support came from the secular authorities, as will be seen in the New Orleans study. Mark Choate has shown that the Italian State developed an attitude towards Catholicism abroad which contrasted with the anti-clericalism at home. The situation has parallels with that of the French government in their North African colonies, described by Rebecca Rogers.⁹⁶ In the early twentieth century the sisters successfully applied for funding from the Italian Commission for Emigration. In 1906 Adolfo Rossi, the Italian Consul in New Orleans wrote to the Commissioner, Leone Reynaudi, of the advantages of working with Cabrini and her sisters who 'on their own have achieved more than the large Italian-American Colony has in twenty five years'.⁹⁷ The relationship with the Italian Ambassador in France was also good. In September 1903 Cabrini wrote, 'Our House in Paris remains tranquil. Combes has said to the Italian Minister that they turn a blind eye to us'.⁹⁸ The Ambassador's wife assisted in procuring the

⁹⁵ These are in : Archivio Particolare di Pius X. Cited in Sanfilippo 'Il Vaticano e l'emigrazione nelle Americhe' in *Per le Strade del Mondo*, ed., Bartoloni, 339-363.

⁹⁶ Choate, *Emigrant Nation*; Ruth Rogers, 'Religious Teaching Orders and French School Culture in an Anticlerical Age: Suggestions for a Transnational History of Girls' Education' (Paper presented at *ISCHE conference*, 23-26 July 2014, IOE, London).

⁹⁷ April 12, 1906, 'Letter to Leone Reynaudi', CR.

⁹⁸ *Epistolario* 4, September 28th, 1903, 228. At the start of the twentieth century, Cabrini feared possible expulsion as a result of the anti-clerical agenda of the Bloc des gauches (Left Coalition), led by the freemason, Emile Combes.

house of Josephine de Beauharnais in Noisy le Grande in 1914 and the Ambassador served as the President of the orphanage.⁹⁹

The work of Cabrini and her sisters became well-known in Italy and the United States in this period. As well as more published Travel Letters, there were reports in newspapers, and in the bulletins published by the Commission for Emigration. They also contributed to exhibitions such as the Italians Abroad Exhibition, part of the 1906 International Exposition, held in Milan. They won the *Gran Premio* for their work with Italian migrants.¹⁰⁰ Queen Margarita visited their stand. She asked Cabrini if she was the cousin of Depretis¹⁰¹ and the person who supported the *Magistero* in Rome. She told her that the Countess of Somaglia, 'often spoke to her about it and that it is a beautiful work'.¹⁰² Cabrini noted that the other important visitors were surprised to see the Queen so familiar with her. She also came to the attention of the organising committee of the first Italian Women's Congress in 1908. She was invited to address the Congress as an expert on women and migration.¹⁰³ She was not able to attend due to commitments in the United States. The letter she sent on the subject was read aloud to the assembled group and the record shows that they applauded the contents.¹⁰⁴

Limitations Difficulties and Failure

Just as many opportunities opened up in the Americas, Cabrini was delayed in Italy for two years from September 1896 until August 1898, dealing with a financial dispute. Bishop Gelmini of Lodi, gave capital to the

⁹⁹ Countess Spottiswood Mackin March 29, 1921, 'Memories', CR.

¹⁰⁰ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre* 314.

¹⁰¹ Cabrini's cousin who had been Prime Minister of Italy.

¹⁰² *Epistolario* 4, June 23, 1906, 499-500.

¹⁰³ Lucetta Scaraffia, 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini', Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

MSC in the early days, on condition that interest went to three Ursulines. This was disputed after Gelmini's death. The case went to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Ordinaries. They found in favour of the MSC. There were also internal difficulties. A serious financial problem arose in Chicago in 1903-4. Mother Agostina Chiodini, the sister administrator of the hospital, spent \$35,000 on building work without permission.¹⁰⁵ Mother Domenica Bianchi was called in as temporary president to troubleshoot.¹⁰⁶ In London, as will be seen in the case study, there were also problems. The superior, Mother Rafael Nefer, proved unsuitable for the job and had to be removed. Mother Agostina was moved in from Chicago to take over. In 1906, she had problems and Mother Domenica was also sent to London to troubleshoot. Meanwhile in Rome, Mother Gesuina faced her biggest challenge as she dealt with a rebellion of sisters in Cabrini's absence. It took place in 1904-5, and is explored in the Rome study. Cabrini supported Gesuina by writing from across the Atlantic.

The difficulties do raise the question of whether Cabrini's enthusiasm led her to over-extend herself and the Institute. It was clear to her that the management structures needed reviewing, to meet the needs of a global organisation. Although she had delegated in the first 25 years of the life of the Institute by 1905 she needed to devote time to establishing a more formal structure. The rebellion made this a necessity. Cabrini spent 1906-7 in Rome re-writing the Rule as the 1907 Constitutions. She applied to the Holy See for final approbation. The 1907 Constitutions shared most of the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ 'Testimony by M Frances X Cabrini, August 16, 1904', C R, D, 76a.

features of the 1881 Rule, continuing to emphasise virtue. There were more detailed proscriptions on the habit and admission of sisters. The most significant change was a formal central structure consisting of a General Council of a Superior General, two assistants and a bursar. There was also a stipulation for triennial visitations to houses by one of the Council. The document also recognised the multi-national nature of the organisation. The 1881 point on unity of the community was expanded to reflect this:

The members of this Institute, as much as they are of different temperaments and from different countries should form one Body there should be one will one spirit among them: a single heart in God. In each one they should see a true sister that they should love as themselves and they should never regard another sister as a foreigner.¹⁰⁷

There was also guidance for Novice Mistresses which included the need to avoid stifling lively minds:

Do not stifle or oppress the lively, impetuous and alert (*pronte*) minds; rather be compassionate and support these defects which are inevitable in them, especially in the beginning: know how to cultivate such subjects with special care and activities; these will succeed in being useful to the Institute.¹⁰⁸

Following the rebellion, the stipulation regarding superiors reading the sisters' private letters changed. In addition to letters to and from Cabrini remaining private, those to Assistant Generals, the Bishop and the Sacred Congregations were also not to be read. Each sister had her own printed copy of the Constitutions.¹⁰⁹ Whilst properties suitable for schools, orphanages and convents were purchased as soon as possible, living conditions were hard for many sisters. Privacy was an issue. The 1910

¹⁰⁷ 1907 'Costituzioni dell'Istituto' AG, 15.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 36.

¹⁰⁹ 'Relazione Triennale', 1910, AG, 7.

Report to the Holy See recorded that whilst it was the aim to give very sister her own cell, many only had a curtained off section of a dormitory.¹¹⁰ In 1910 Cabrini announced that she planned to step down as Superior General to allow the sisters to elect someone younger and more energetic. The announcement was followed by a flood of letters to Rome from houses throughout the Institute asking her assistants to persuade her to stay for life. They approached the Holy See and obtained a decree proclaiming Cabrini Superior General for life.¹¹¹

In spite of the number who entered, there were never enough qualified, English-speaking teaching sisters. As a result lay women were employed in some schools in the United States.¹¹² This was expensive. Cabrini hoped that the Holy See would fund a novitiate for the MSC missions in Rome and approached Rampolla and the *Propaganda Fide*, with no success. There were also never enough generous benefactors. The committee of royalty and aristocrats and the generosity of Captain Pizzati, whose support will be explored in the Rome and New Orleans studies respectively, were unusual. Cabrini wrote advising sisters in England to make contact with the Duke of Norfolk and Duchess of Newcastle.¹¹³ Those in the United States were asked to do likewise with Carnegie. Neither group of sisters succeeded.

Cabrini left Europe for the last time in 1912. The sisters in England had booked her passage on the Titanic. She was, however, delayed. She had not abandoned her original missionary dream to inflame the world with

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹¹¹ *Una delle sue Figlie, La Madre*, 328-336.

¹¹² Ibid., 221.

¹¹³ *Epistolario* 4, July 08, 1902, 51.

the love of Christ. Whilst focusing on the education of Italian migrants, her vision for continued global expansion was evident in a recruitment leaflet at the turn of the century:

The Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as indicated by its title, has as its purpose the spread of the Reign of Jesus Christ throughout the earth. The mission of the Institute is worldwide evangelization – to inflame all people with the love of Jesus Christ without distinction of race or nationality, embracing everyone be they rich or poor, educated or uneducated. We hope to expand our outreach to the ends of the earth.¹¹⁴

She herself did not reach China. Her Institute had reached Seattle whence ships sailed to China. It was there at the extreme of the MSC periphery, that Cabrini became a US citizen in 1909. Sisters led by Mother Domenica Bianchi set sail for China from Seattle in 1926.

Conclusion

By 1917 Cabrini had established a global educational organisation in nine nations on three continents. In doing so, she worked with both secular and Church authorities. In spite of the anti-clericalism of the time, she and her sisters established good working relationships with secular authorities. Her ability to represent Rome in America and America in Rome placed her in a relationship with the Church hierarchy which was most unusual for a woman. Her transnational network of contacts, established through the members of other religious institutes and families of sisters and pupils, was also a key factor. These contacts provided introductions to the authorities, assisted in procuring resources for the schools and gave valuable advice on the educational needs of the location.

¹¹⁴ 'L'istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù', LA.

The main focus of the work of Cabrini and her sisters in this period was to provide a Catholic education for Italian migrants. The formal educational institutions also provided opportunities for a range of community educational provision. A multi-national professional body of teaching sisters benefitted from education and formation to prepare them for their work. The three chapters which follow will demonstrate how Cabrini articulated her understanding of Catholic educational practice in establishing and maintaining this provision in three cities. The extent, to which Cabrini's understanding was implemented, will be examined for each location. The data gathered will then be used to evaluate whether Cabrini had a coherent approach to Catholic educational practice.

Chapter 5: Rome Case Study, 1887-1917

Introduction

Cabrini established a range of educational provision in Rome from 1887. The MSC is best known for work with migrants in the Italian Diaspora. In Rome the sisters also educated many migrants, who came to the city from across Italy, after it became the Italian capital in 1871. They established free and fee-paying schools, formal and informal community education and a new parish. As the future of women religious in Italy was uncertain, Cabrini saw the need for a Catholic teaching force of lay women and established provision for female students of higher education. By 1901 the MSC had two schools, a student residence, the General House and a novitiate on two sites in the Italian capital.

A range of sources has been used to consider Cabrini's educational practice in Rome. There are many letters in the *Epistolario* which refer to the practicalities of the start-ups. House annals cover the period 1887-1904.¹ These include details of sisters and provision in the schools and community, including some statistics. An early twentieth century prospectus for *Collegio del Sacro Cuore* and a programme from the Rome celebration of the 25th anniversary of the MSC foundation, held on 9th December 1906, provide further data on curriculum and pedagogy.² There are also personal testimonies from two teachers, Mothers Serafina

¹ 'Relazione della Casa di Roma', 6-145. AG (RR), 'Memorie Roma', AG.

² 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 3 Via Montebello, CR. The date is probably circa 1910 as the format is the same as the London 1910 prospectus; 'Trattenimento Accademico per festeggiare il Venticinquesimo anniversario della fondazione dell'istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù and La consecrazione della Chiesa del SS. Redentore' (Rome: Tipographia Eredi Cav. A. Befani, 1907) LA.

Thomasi and Maddalena Savaré.³ There are more student accounts available for Rome than for New Orleans and London. The 1906 programme includes the text of an address by a *Magistero* student. A letter from another, on behalf of the boarders, is included in a 20 page circular letter, sent to mark the 1912 Silver Jubilee of the Rome foundation.⁴ Obituaries and letters of condolence include letters from 15 former students of the residence in Rome.⁵ Sources providing a perspective from those outside of the MSC include a discourse on 'The MSC and the Education of Women', in the 1906 programme and a number of the obituaries and condolences.⁶ De Maria's biography contains more details on Rome than on the other two case study foundations. She was well placed to research Rome as she was based there from 1909. She included an account of the rebellion against Cabrini by a group of MSC sisters there in 1904-5.⁷ Four public letters to Rome provide coherent expositions of her understanding of Catholic educational practice. Three are letters of 1904, 1905 and 1906 to the *Magistero* students in the 'Travels'.⁸ The fourth is her Letter to the 1908 Italian Women's Congress.⁹

³ 'Fondazione della Casa di Roma' (Dalle Memorie di M. Serafina Tommasi), 1-5. (FR); November 21, 1912, Circolare N. 19, Circular Letters 1891-1957 bound volume, LA.

⁴ 21 November 1912, Circolare N.19, 74-83.

⁵ MSC ed., *In Memoria della Rev.ma Madre Francesca Saverio Cabrini*, New York: Bernasconi, 1919) 198-205, 296.

⁶ Professoressa Rosa Vagnozzi, 'Le Missionarie e la Oltura della Donna', in 'Trattenimento Accademico', 29-34.

⁷ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 262-4.

⁸ Alle Alunne dell'istituto di Magistero', Da New Orleans, maggio 1904, 501-517; 'Alle Alunne dell'istituto di Magistero' Da Denver, maggio 1905, 521-531; 'Alle Alunne dell'istituto di Magistero' Da Chicago, febbraio 1906, 534-563, Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*.

⁹ March 1908, 'Letter from Francesca Cabini to Presidenza della Contessa Danieli Camozzi, for the Italian Women's Congress' in 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini', Scaraffia, Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants.

5.1 Establishing conditions for Mother Cabrini's educational practice

Networks and Authorities

As explained in the last chapter, the establishment of the Rome foundation was facilitated by network contacts made in Lombardy, as well as those Cabrini set up on arrival in Rome. She and her companion, Mother Serafina Tommasi, stayed with the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary at 12, Via Giusti, from 25th September until the end of October. De Maria wrote that Cabrini 'had the comfort of finding both a mother and a sister' in Mother Mary of the Passion, their Foundress and Superior General.¹⁰ She gave valuable advice on dealing with the authorities. When establishing schools in Italy, Cabrini dealt with both Church and civil authorities. After providing the necessary documentation, she gained the support of Cardinal Lucio Maria Parocchi, Vicar General of Rome and Regent of the Pontifical Commission for Schools. He asked her to found a Free Pontifical School in the Porta Pia district of Rome. Cabrini's first step was to visit the parish priest, a Lateran Canon, who assisted in finding a suitable apartment.¹¹ The Vice-Regent at the Pontifical Commission for Schools, Monsignor Giulio Lenti, sent her to see the Marchese Patrizi, a member of the Charity Schools Committee (*Comitato delle Scuole di Carità*).¹² She wrote that 'he should give me everything that is necessary, linen and billboards/posters, etc.'¹³ Rome was a centre for anti-clericalism and Protestant evangelisation. Nevertheless, Deputy Maiocchi, a well-known Liberal, from whom the sisters were to rent the apartment,

¹⁰ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 68.

¹¹ The Lateran Canons were later to support Cabrini in establishing and extending her foundation in England –see London Case study.

¹² *Epistolario 1*, October 29, 1887, 260.

¹³ *Epistolario 1*, October 29, 1887, 260.

assisted in dealing with the civil authorities.¹⁴ Cabrini wrote to her brother:

I did not have too much to do to gain permission for the school as Deputy Maiocchi himself offered to help and took it upon himself to obtain for me all the necessary papers as I was in an unfamiliar area and I found friends who came to my aid.¹⁵

Location and Need

The locations of the Rome houses are shown on Map 5, on page 162. The concierge of the sisters' apartment told Cabrini that her daughter needed a free school.¹⁶ The Liberal Maiocchi may have supported the establishment of a convent school due to local difficulties in providing free, compulsory primary education, a requirement of the 1877 Coppino Law. In Rome both civil and diocesan authorities had failed to keep pace with rapid urbanisation. The population of Rome increased significantly after it became the capital of Italy in 1871. It grew from 200,000 to 460,000 by the end of the century.¹⁷ Civil servants moved from the north. Peasants from the south came seeking work on building projects. Concern that the city be guarded against enemies, resulted in an increase in soldiers from 4,000 in 1871 to 12,649 in 1889.¹⁸ Porta Pia was on the periphery of the city. David Forgacs explains that 'from 1873 all urban plans of Rome placed areas of housing for the lower classes on the rim of the city'.¹⁹ In his work on marginal and socially excluded groups, resulting from the creation of modern Italy, Forgacs argues that 'the peripheries of

¹⁴ Benedictine, 40.

¹⁵ *Epistolario* 1, January 20, 1888, 277.

¹⁶ *Epistolario* 1, October 25, 1887, 258.

¹⁷ Christopher Hibbert, *Rome: The Biography of a City*. (London: Penguin Books, 1984), 282.

¹⁸ R J B Bosworth, *Whispering City: Modern Rome and its Histories* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 119.

¹⁹ David Forgacs, *Italy's Margins*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 29.

cities became its first and most visible margins'.²⁰ The Rome House Annals recorded that 'the position of the house could not have been better because it was in fact deprived of other means of instruction civil or religious'.²¹

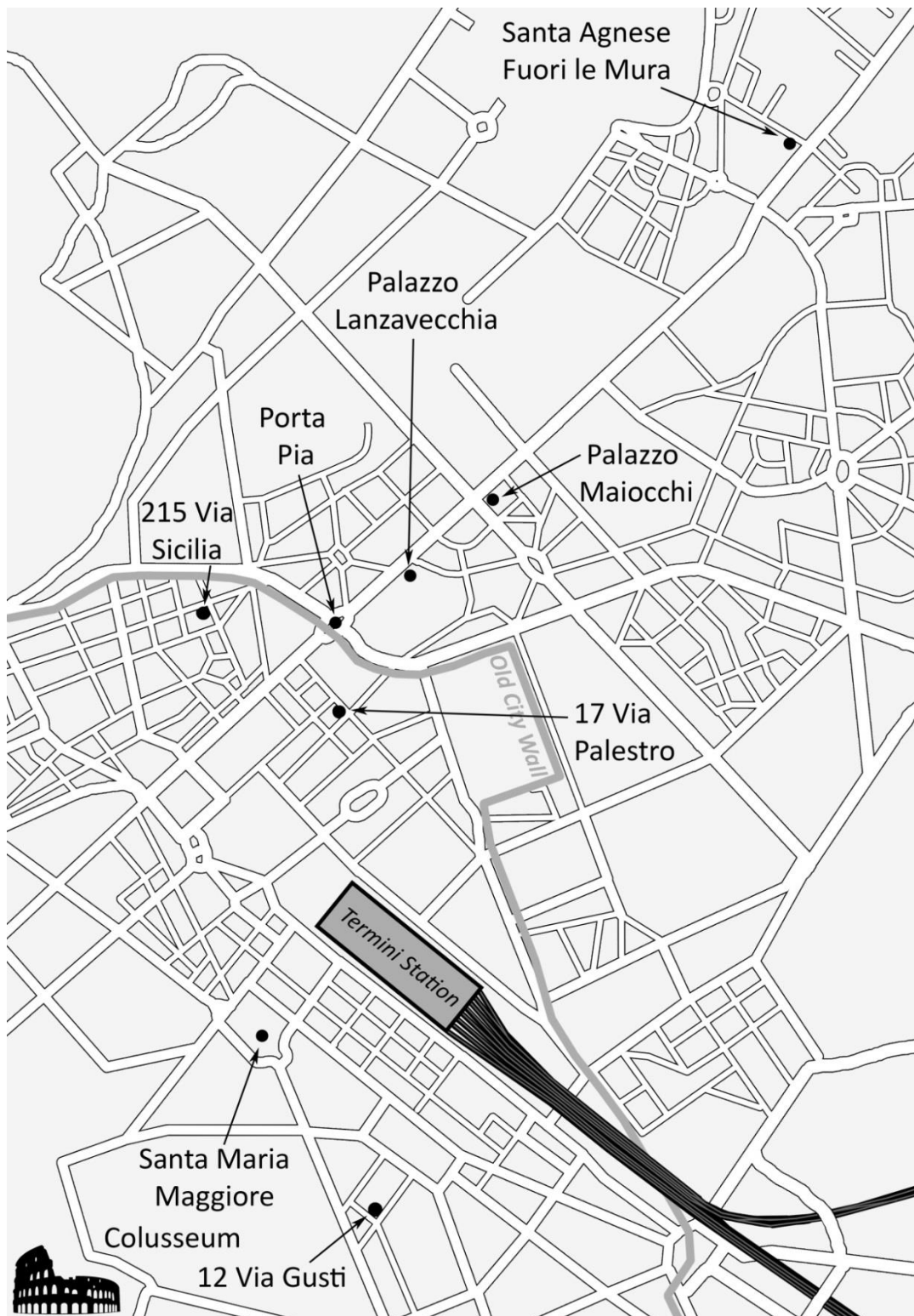
The MSC worked in the Porta Pia area for 14 years, from 1887-1901. In November 1887 they founded *L'Immacolata*, a free Pontifical School, and *San Michele*, a fee-paying school and nursery in the apartment in Palazzo Maiochi, 101, Via Nomenatana, 200 metres from the Porta Pia. In November 1889, a student residence was established in rented accommodation, Palazzo Lanzavecchia, nearby. In October 1894, a large building, 17, Via Palestro, on the corner of Via Montebello, was purchased. This was within the old city wall in a more prestigious area. *San Michele* and the student residence transferred there. The whole facility was named *Collegio del Sacro Cuore*. In 1898 the General House transferred there from Codogno. A small novitiate was also established. For the next seven years the sisters travelled daily to Via Nomentana from the new house.²² By the turn of the century, the diocese wanted the MSC to found a school in the Ludovisi Quarter, another peripheral development. There was Protestant but no Catholic provision. In Rome at that time Protestant evangelisers were active, as well as local associations of anti-clerical Free Thinkers and Freemasons.

²⁰ Ibid, 64.

²¹ RR, 6.

²² RR, 43.

Map 5: Locations of Rome Houses 1887-1917



Finlay Wojtan, using [OpenStreetMap](#)

Note: Cabrini changed the front entrance to 17, Via Palestro so that it became 1, Via Montebello in 1896.

The sisters passed the Via Nomentana free Pontifical School to the Ursuline sisters in 1901. They opened another, Holy Redeemer, in Via Sicilia, in the Ludovisi Quarter. The House Annals described it as follows:

A more favourable and suitable position could not have been found because people gathered from all the cities of Italy, who have unfortunately forgotten their God and know nothing of the sublime mysteries of our Holy Religion, live in these most populous *Quartieri*.²³

Anti-clerical activities increased in Rome with the election of the leading mason, Ernesto Nathan, as mayor in 1907.²⁴

Accommodation, Resources and Funding

On 1st November 1887 five co-founder sisters arrived from Codogno to join Cabrini and Mother Serafina. They moved into Via Nomentana the same day. Cabrini planned to open the school two weeks later.²⁵ The five sisters brought resources, 'as the generous bursar of Codogno had inaugurated her system of sending the sisters weighted down with large parcels for new foundations'.²⁶ Cabrini went to auctions to buy furniture as the rented apartment was sparsely furnished:

The bedding that first night, consisted of straw mattresses and blankets purchased that same day to cover them as they slept in their clothes. In the morning both Mother and the sisters had to go to the scullery to wash. They found that the tables were boards placed on old stands.²⁷

The 3,000 lire per annum rent was, however, paid a month in arrears giving time to raise funds.²⁸ In the spirit of subsidiarity, Cabrini requested help

²³ RR, 112.

²⁴ David I Kertzer, 'Religion and Society, 1789-1892' in *Italy in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. John A Davis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 202.

²⁵ *Epistolario 1*, November 7, 1887, 265.

²⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 74.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁸ *Epistolario 1*, October 25, 1887, 259.

from MSC superiors, rather than directing. She wrote that 'superiors of the other houses all promised something for the house in Rome'.²⁹ 100 lire arrived from Grumello. They had promised 200, so Cabrini wrote, 'if you have it, there is great need of it here as we have to buy things which are so expensive.'³⁰ Prices in Rome were three times higher than in Milan.³¹ Benefactors helped. Monsignor Serrati, the parish priest of Codogno, gave 500 lire for the journey of the five sisters and 1.000 lire to meet the most pressing needs of the new foundation.³² Between July 1888 and 1890 Monsignor Francesco Cassetta gave several donations of 100 lire for the needs of the house.³³ Father Tommaso Granello OP sent a picture of the Virgin of Pompeii.³⁴ In 1890 Monsignor Casare Taggiasco donated many books as well as the altar from his chapel, candlesticks, other small things, a statue of the Sacred Heart and a relic of Blessed Margaret Mary.³⁵

Generating regular income was a constant concern during the start-up. The Pontifical School had no income for the first two years.³⁶ In 1889 the sisters were granted a monthly subsidy of 121, 66 lire from the Pontifical Commission to enlarge it.³⁷ They acquired a second apartment in the Palazzo Maiocchi and the roll rose from 39 to 176. In the meantime, the scarcity of accommodation in Rome had led the sisters to offer board and

²⁹ *Epistolario 1*, Oct/Nov 1887, 63.

³⁰ *Epistolario 1*, November 7, 1887, 264.

³¹ *Epistolario 1*, November 7, 1887, 264.

³² Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 73.

³³ RR, 8; 14.

³⁴ *Epistolario 5*, 680; RR, 8.

³⁵ RR, 14; *Epistolario 1*, November 7, 1887, 264.

³⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 72.

³⁷ RR, 10.

lodgings for pilgrims.³⁸ Simonetta Ortaggi has shown that letting rooms provided income for married women.³⁹ Whilst Porta Pia was an important landmark in the story of the *Risorgimento*⁴⁰, the area would have also been attractive for Christian pilgrims. In 1875 Augustus Hare described the many Christian monuments nearby in *Walks in Rome*.⁴¹ In April 1888 pilgrims from Lombardy, as well as the Director of the postal services from Milan, stayed.⁴² Three pilgrims shared the room and were charged 5 lire a day for lodgings and lunch.⁴³ This also extended and strengthened the network of contacts.

It was the development of work with student boarders, concurrently with overseas expansion in the transatlantic period, which changed the MSC fortunes in Rome. Students had boarded with the sisters from the outset. Writing to Sister Providenza Tresoldi in March 1888, Cabrini asked good-humouredly, 'I don't suppose you have a few millionaire boarders who want to come to Rome?'⁴⁴ By 1889 there were 11 student boarders. Some attended normal schools and the prestigious *Istituto Superiore di Magistero* for women preparing to teach in normal schools.⁴⁵ Cabrini was keen to expand this work and include an educational programme to

³⁸ RR, 6.

³⁹ Simonetta Ortaggi, 'Labouring Women in North and Central Italy', In *Society and Politics in the Age of the Risorgimento*, eds. John A Davis, and Paul Ginsborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 175.

⁴⁰ On 20 September 1870 General Raffaele Cadorna (1815-1897) led troops into Rome through a breach in the walls close to the Porta Pia gate bringing to an end 1500 years of papal temporal power.

⁴¹ Augustus J C Hare, *Walks in Rome* (London: Daldy, Isbister & Co., 1875). Available: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/39308/39308-h/39308-h.htm#vol_2, (Accessed 17/07/ 2016).

In addition to the catacomb of Saint Agnes, those of Saints Alexander and Nicodemus were also nearby as was the burial place of Saint Giustina and Constantine's church of Saint Costanza.

⁴² *Epistolario 1*, April 26, 1888, 286; April 16, 1888, 302.

⁴³ *Epistolario 1*, April 16, 1888, 302-3.

⁴⁴ *Epistolario 1*, March 6, 1888, 288.

⁴⁵ It was one of two such institutes established by the Italian government in 1882, the other being in Florence.

supplement the secular provision of the *Magistero*. The MSC had established a residence for Catholic students in Milan in 1884. Protestants had already established a subsidised one in Rome.⁴⁶ With the expansion of the Pontifical School more space was needed. On 30th November 1889, the student boarders were transferred to their own apartment in the Palazzo Lanzavecchia.⁴⁷ Cabrini's opportunity to develop the project came through her network contacts, following an encounter with Monsignor Giacomo Maria Radini Tedeschi (1857-1914).⁴⁸ They met in Codogno, where he was on holiday in 1891.⁴⁹ He demonstrated his commitment to the project by contributing 600 lire for two student scholarships the same year.⁵⁰ Fr Tommaso Granello OP arranged for two French ladies to contribute 10 lire monthly.⁵¹

Tedeschi worked in the Secretariat of State of the Holy See. The Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla, made Leo XIII aware of the project. They already knew Cabrini through her work in the Americas. At the time, Cabrini was liaising with Rampolla, regarding the foundation in Nicaragua and gathering intelligence on the Mosquito territory for him. Rampolla allowed Tedeschi to devote time to the project. He formed a fund raising committee with Princess Antici Mattei as the President. Other members of the nobility joined, including the Marcesa Maddalena Patrizi and Count Vincenzo Macchi. The committee raised funds for more free places allocating 20 from 1897-8.⁵² The Holy See must have considered the work

⁴⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 121.

⁴⁷ RR, 11.

⁴⁸ Tedeschi, from a noble family in Piacenza, is known for his support for the Catholic Movement in Italy.

⁴⁹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 120.

⁵⁰ RR, 22.

⁵¹ RR, 22.

⁵² Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 121; RR, 57.

important as on one occasion, after Cabrini asked Rampolla to seek funding from the Pope, Leo XIII handed her a 1,000 lire note from his private purse.⁵³ In 1894 Leo contributed 100,000 lire towards the purchase of a house for the project, a five story building on the corner of Via Palestro and Via Montebello.⁵⁴ Tedeschi donated a marble altar and statue of Our Lady of Lourdes for the chapel.⁵⁵ The student library was made up of donations from benefactors.⁵⁶

Via Palestrino was improved to attract pupils from wealthier families to the fee-paying school at *Collegio del Sacro Cuore*. Some boarded along with the *Magistero* and normal school students.⁵⁷ To make it more attractive Cabrini moved the front entrance in 1896.⁵⁸ The address then became 1, Via Montebello rather than 17, Via Palestrino. During 1897 more dormitories and a bathroom were created to 'meet the requirements of hygiene and modern living.'⁵⁹ In 1899 the refectory was enlarged as numbers continued to rise.⁶⁰ The early twentieth century prospectus describes the accommodation as 'a well ventilated house in one of the most salubrious quarters of the city'.⁶¹ The prospectus sets out an annual inscription fee of 30 lire and 2000 lire per annum, paid in three instalments at the start of each term. There was an additional charge of 30 lire per annum for bed linen, furniture, and table linen. The school pupils

⁵³ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 168.

⁵⁴ RR, 39; 'Relazione 1907', 4.

⁵⁵ RR, 42; 44.

⁵⁶ RR, 57-8.

⁵⁷ RR, 78.

⁵⁸ RR, 49.

⁵⁹ RR, 62.

⁶⁰ RR, 97.

⁶¹ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore'.

and students of higher education were offered 'Extras' in languages and music. This generated more income.

In 1900-1901, Leo XIII and the Pontifical Commission helped to fund the move from Via Nomentana to Via Sicilia in the *Ludovisi* Quarter. Cabrini found a large property, adjacent to land suitable for a church. Leo paid for the transfer of the school. Although the new building was ready in 1900, the Ursulines, who were to have the Pontifical School in Via Nomentana, were not ready to open it until 1901.⁶² Cabrini insisted that the Commission pay the high rent for the school and chapel for the year.⁶³ By 1907, the subsidy from the Pontifical Commission for Via Sicilia was 5,000 lire per annum.⁶⁴

The accommodation in Rome also provided a base for formal and informal community educational provision. This included some through outreach and visits, some in the parish churches and some using the school facilities. The sisters' chapel in the Via Nomentana became the parish church for many of their neighbours. In 1900 Cabrini built the Church of the Redeemer to serve as the parish church in the *Quartieri Ludovisi*. Leo XIII donated 25,000 lire towards the cost. There was also accommodation in the countryside, close to Rome. Cardinal Parochi asked Cabrini to establish a nursery in Aspra, 50 km to the north east of Rome, at the same time as sending her to Porta Pia in 1887. It opened in 1889. She also saw it as a location for a holiday retreat for the Rome community. Due to lack of

⁶² RR, 113.

⁶³ RR, 43.

⁶⁴ 'Relazione 1907'.

spiritual support, it closed in July 1891.⁶⁵ In November 1892 she bought a house in Montecompatri, 20 km to the south east of Rome, as a holiday home for sisters and boarders.

Recruitment

Initial recruitment was through personal contact. Writing to advise the superior of the new foundation in Paris in 1899, Cabrini told her that in Rome the sisters recruited by visiting homes.⁶⁶ By the end of the first academic year, 1887-8, there were 37 pupils in *L'Immacolata*, the free Pontifical School.⁶⁷ Following a satisfactory end of year inspection, they decided to open *San Michele*, a fee-paying school. Cabrini suggested that Mother Maddalena Savaré, the superior, publicise the schools with an *academia* in the summer holidays of 1888, inviting families of the parish with children.⁶⁸ The Vice-Regent could give prizes. She would send songs for the occasion. This was to become part of MSC start-ups and is evident in New Orleans and London. In the early twentieth century a prospectus was produced for *Collegio del Sacro Cuore*.⁶⁹

The Founding Community

The Rome community began with six sisters, the minimum Cabrini expected. They were Cabrini's travelling companion, Mother Serafina Thomasi (1858-1890), Mother Maddalena Savaré (1854-1928), Sister Michelina Radice (1863-1945), Sister Umilia Capietti (1851-1915), Sister Alfonsa Bricchi (1866-1893) and Sister Concetta Arnaboldi (1867-1959).

⁶⁵ RR, 21.

⁶⁶ *Epistolario* 3, 249, undated inserted in January 1899 letters; RR, 57.

⁶⁷ RR, 6.

⁶⁸ *Epistolario* 1, July 14, 1888, 343; July 20, 1888, 345.

⁶⁹ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', circa 1910.

Their ages ranged from 20 to 36, with an average of 27. The superior, 33 year old Maddalena, had start-up experience. She had served as founding superior in Casalpusterlengo from 1885-1887, establishing a school and nursery.⁷⁰

Table 8, on page 171, shows that four of the six co-founders were well-educated women. Mothers Maddalena and Alfonsa both had their *patente*. Mother Serafina had finished her education in Germany. She was fluent in a number of languages and qualified in art and music. Sister Umilia was an expert teacher of needlework. They met the expectations of the Pontifical Commission for Schools. Giancarlo Rocca has pointed out that ‘the preoccupation of the Commission with having teachers-both lay and religious- with recognised diplomas was constant’.⁷¹ Cabrini confirms this, writing that the Commission wanted ‘Catholic schools to compare favourably with others’.⁷² After her first meeting with Cardinal Parochi, she sent for the sisters’ examination certificates and *patente* as well as recommendations from Bishops and the local Mayor.⁷³

⁷⁰ *Epistolario* 5, 641.

⁷¹ Rocca, ‘La Formazione delle Religiose Insegnanti, 433.

⁷² *Epistolario* 1, undated, October or November 1887, 262.

⁷³ *Epistolario* 1, September, 1887, 242-4; September 26, 1887, 244-6.

Table 8: Rome Co-founders, 1887

Name	Age	Born	Education	Role
M Serafina Thomasi	29	Milan	E	Music, Mod Langs.T
M Maddalena Savaré	33	Lodi	P	Upper Sch.T
S Michelina Radice	24	Milan	N	Nursery T
S Umilia Capietti	36	Milan	T	Needlework T
S Alfonsa Bricchi	21	Casalp.	P	Upper grade T
S Concetta Arnaboldi	20	Milan	N	Cook, bursar, door

Key: E - Well Educated; M - Mother; N - No record; P - *Patente*; S - Sister; T - Teacher

Source: 'Note Biografiche', *Epistolario* 5, 621-753.

Cabrini was on hand for the first seven months of the school start-up and played an important part in establishing the MSC Rule as a way of life. This included prayer life, retreats and the need to observe silence. When founding a new house, Cabrini's priority was always to establish conditions for the sisters' devotional life, in particular to have a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament reserved, daily mass in the convent and a good confessor. Initially the sisters did not have funds for a chaplain. By December 1887, Sr. Umilia Capietti, 'was able to find a priest who agreed to say mass although there were no means for an offering'.⁷⁴ When they moved to Via Montebello in October 1894 the sisters had to go out to mass for the first ten days until a room was blessed for a temporary chapel.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ RR, 6-7.

⁷⁵ RR, 41.

5.2 Implementing Mother Cabrini's educational practice In the Schools

Pupils, Staffing and School Organisation

Throughout the period the vast majority of school pupils were girls. Boys aged three to six years attended the fee-paying nurseries. There is no reference to the religion of those at the day schools. The prospectus for the Collegio *Collegio del Sacro Cuore* shows that boarders were Catholic. Certificates of birth, baptism, confirmation and good conduct from the parish priest or bishop were required for admission. At that time boarders were also required to be healthy. Entrance requirements included a medical certificate, indicating good health and 'evidence of vaccinations to meet the requirements of the Municipal authorities'.⁷⁶

Many of the poorer pupils were migrants to Rome. Cabrini described the families in Porta Pia as coming from 'the hundred cities of Italy'.⁷⁷ Similarly, the House Annals describe the inhabitants of the Ludovisi area, around Via Sicilia, as 'people gathered from all the cities of Italy'.⁷⁸ The origins of the fee-paying pupils are not recorded but the *Magistero* boarders were educational migrants. Women had to study either in Rome or Florence to gain the qualification required by law to teach in a normal school. The *Memorie* refer to pupils at Via Montebello as being from 'the best families who were well off'.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', circa 1910.

⁷⁷ *Epistolario* 3, 249, undated inserted in January 1899 letters.

⁷⁸ RR, 112.

⁷⁹ RR, 106.

The early sisters, like their pupils, were migrants to Rome. They all came from northern Italy. From 1888 postulants entered in Rome. The origins of most are not indicated but Clotilde Lombardi⁸⁰ from Cuneo, Piedmont and Anna de Giovanni from Lugo, Emilia-Romagna, were from Northern Italy, like the co-founders.⁸¹ Sister Filippina Cività Scalessi, who entered in January 1888, was born in Gaeta, which lies between Rome and Naples.⁸² During the 1890s, due to the transnational expansion of the Institute, fee-paying pupils and teaching students experienced a multi-national group of teachers. These included Anna Thutt, a French postulant from Paris; Mother Rafael Nefer, later founding superior in London, from Germany; Mother Carmela Arana from Nicaragua, another London co-founder and a postulant from Spain. American Mother Rosa Hogan arrived in 1898 and spent most of her life in the city. She worked as a secretary and interpreter, as well as an English teacher.⁸³ There are no records of lay teachers during this period, as there are in New Orleans and London.

There was considerable staff mobility during the start-up. Mothers Serafina, Concetta, and Michelina, three of the six co-founders, had all left for the United States by May 1889. Well-educated sisters replaced them. Two, who remained for many years, were MSC alumnae. Mother Maria Gesuina Diotti (1864-1941) and Mother Filomena Panzi (1866-1952) had been boarders in Milan. Mother Gesuina had completed her teaching studies, gaining *l'Abilitazione Magistrale*, with the 'best grades' in 1888.⁸⁴ The following year she came to Rome and took up the role of prefect,

⁸⁰ Clotilde entered and became Mother Josephine. She went to the United States and was a key figure in New Orleans.

⁸¹ *Epistolario* 5, 693; RR, 19.

⁸² *Epistolario* 5, 682.

⁸³ RR, 90; 91; 104; 115; 121; 128; 137.

⁸⁴ *Epistolario* 5, 658.

looking after the pastoral needs of the *Magistero* students. Mother Filomena had taught in Milan before moving to *l'Immacolata* in 1895.⁸⁵ Former student and pupil boarders also entered in Rome. Aurora Curcio, a *Magistero* student and higher grade teacher, entered on 4th October 1894 and taught as a postulant.⁸⁶

During the thirty-one years from 1887-1918, there was also stable leadership. Mother Maddalena Savaré was *Directrice* until 1892 and then Mother Gesuina Diotti. Maddalena taught in the private school for the first five years until her departure in 1892. From 1889 until the closure in 1901, the upper years in the Pontifical School in Via Nomentana were taught by Gesuina and her assistant Mother Ancilla Negri (1864-1909).⁸⁷ Mother Filomena Panzi moved from *l'Immacolata* to Via Sicilia. She became the headmistress and remained there for most of her life.

Whilst pupil numbers are not available for all years it is clear that the roll rose rapidly from 49 pupils in 1888 to over 200 in 1889 and 400 by the early years of the twentieth century, as indicated in Table 9, on page 175. The nursery roll for Via Nomentana is not recorded. In Via Motebello it rose from 15 in 1896 to 20 in the years 1900-1903. The pupils from the free and fee-paying schools were joined together for activities throughout the period. In the early years in the Via Nomentana, the difference between free and fee-paying pupils was blurred. In April 1888, Cabrini wrote of 'little girls and young ladies from the fee-paying school' sharing a

⁸⁵ *Epistolario* 5, 663.

⁸⁶ RR, 41-2.

⁸⁷ *Epistolario* 5, 656.

classroom.⁸⁸ The 1890s were years of increased poverty in the area. Following the ‘rampant property speculation’ of the 1880s in Rome, many of the building projects were abandoned.⁸⁹ In 1891 the House Annals recorded that, ‘there were 137 pupils in the school and almost all free due to the extraordinary way that poverty (*miseria*) has increased in this area’.⁹⁰ After the move to Via Palestro (Montebello) joint *academie* and final examinations continued. The last joint *academia* was in 1899 due to the rising rolls. Joint examinations were held in Via Sicilia from 1901.

Table 9: Number of Pupils, Rome, 1887-1907

Dates	Day Pupils		Total
	Fees	Free	
1887-8	10	39	49
1889	37	176	213
1890	45	118	163
1891*	21	137	158
1892*	-	162	162
1896	50	200	250
1900	50	250	300
1902	-	200	200
1903	-	254	254
1904	-	200	200
1907	100	300	400
Total	313	2036	2349

*Years of increased poverty almost all free

Sources: ‘Relazione della Casa di Roma’ , AG; ‘Relazione 1907’,AG.

⁸⁸ *Epistolario 1*, April 16, 1888, 302-3.

⁸⁹ Joshua Arthurs, *Excavating Modernity: The Roman Past in Fascist Italy*. (New York: Cornell University Press, 2012), 15. San Lorenzo, to the south of Porta Pia, where Montessori established her Casa dei Bambini in 1907, was one such project.

⁹⁰ RR, 19.

Initially pupils were taught in mixed-age, mixed-grade classes: a nursery class, a class for the '*prime classi*' or younger pupils and one combining second, third and fourth grades. Each had their own class teacher. They shared classrooms in the apartment for the first two years until the second apartment was acquired in 1889. By 1893 the third grade had been separated from the others. The school on Via Montebello had a similar arrangement by 1897. By 1901 the rising roll and spacious accommodation in Via Sicilia probably resulted in separate classes and classrooms for each grade at the Pontifical School. They would still have been mixed age classes as they were organised by grades.

It is evident that the sisters were committed to young women completing their education. In the early years the proportion of younger pupils was higher and classes larger.⁹¹ As the economic situation improved and the free school in the Via Nomentana became established the House Annals refer to the success of the sisters in retention of older pupils. In 1898, for example, the secretary wrote:

L'Immacolata, flourished more than ever this year. The number of pupils was good and they persevered to the end of the year, something which is not easy to achieve with the class of pupils who attend this school.⁹²

Similarly by 1899 the Annals noted that 'numbers are very high in the school in Via Montebello, especially in the upper classes'.⁹³ A government inspector who visited that year inspected the '*quinta*' or fifth grade. He 'marvelled to find this class so large in a private school'.⁹⁴ The commitment to continuing education for young women is also evident in

⁹¹ RR, 10.

⁹² RR, 93.

⁹³ RR, 92.

⁹⁴ RR, 92.

the provision for student teacher boarders. Numbers also grew rapidly from one in 1889 to 12 in 1890. They doubled with the move to Via Montebello and the availability of bursaries. Many students lived there for all four years of their course with numbers rising to 36 at the start of the twentieth century. The numbers in the House Annals are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Number of Student Teacher Boarders, Rome 1889-1903

Year	Number
1889	1
1890	12
1891	10
1892	8
1899	24
1900	24
1901	30
1903	36
Total	145

Source: 'Relazione della Casa di Roma' AG.

The MSC community also grew rapidly from the original six sisters in 1887 to 58 in 1910, as indicated in Table 11, on page 178. There was a significant increase with the move to Via Palestro, with numbers rising from 13 in 1894 to 22 in 1895. Numbers include administrators in the General House from 1898. The numbers for the years 1887 to 1891 indicate that the ratio of sisters to pupils was 1 to 8 in 1887-8. It rose to 1 to 11 in 1891 remaining at 1-11 in 1907. Whilst the totals for all years include some lay sisters who were not teachers, most were involved in the school supporting the teachers. The ratio for 1907 is not really comparable with the others years. By then sister administrators of the Mother House

and those in the novitiate contributed to the total. They may, however, have had some role supporting the school as Sister Gesuina Diotti will be seen to do in London when she visited in her capacity as Assistant Superior General. The numbers also indicate that class size grew over the years.

Table 11: Number of Sisters, Rome 1887-1910

Date	Professed	Novices	Postulants	Total
1887	-	-	-	6
1888	-	-	-	6
1889	8	-	3	11
1890	-	-	-	12
1891	-	-	-	14
1892	-	-	-	16
1893	4	3	6	13
1894	3	8	2	13
1895	12	4	6	22
1896	9	11	4	24
1897	-	-	-	23
1898	-	-	-	26
1899	20	4	-	24
1900	-	-	-	32
1907	-	-	-	34
1910	48	8	2	58

Source: 'Relazione della Casa di Roma' AG; 'Relazione 1907', AG; 'Relazione Triennale dell' Instituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù Dal 1907– 1910', AG.

Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

Curriculum

The schools in Rome provided many opportunities for the pupils and teaching students to develop 'cognitive and ornamental competences'.

The curriculum has been pieced together from the Annals, the prospectus for *Collegio del Sacro Cuore* and Cabrini's letters. From 1889 the Annals list the names of all sisters, their roles, and if specialists, their subjects, at the start of each year. The schools followed statutory requirements. This was

spelt out in the early twentieth century prospectus. It stated that courses were taught 'in conformity with the Government Programmes'.⁹⁵ The statutory elementary curriculum comprised reading, writing, arithmetic and moral education. From the outset needlecraft, performing arts and religious education were also part of the core curriculum in the schools. Fee-paying pupils were also offered foreign languages, drawing, other visual arts and solo singing and instrumental music as 'Extras'.

Whilst needlecraft was important for all the students, it could give poorer girls employment. Simonetta Ortaggi has pointed to the increase in population and visitors during this period, creating demand for workers with sewing and needlework skills in Rome.⁹⁶ Work was exhibited, providing examples of good practice. In 1899 during an inspection of the School in Via Montebello the inspector was shown such an exhibition. He 'really admired many beautiful pieces of embroidery'.⁹⁷ By 1900 there were two specialist teachers to meet the demand across the schools. Students were 'trained in all kinds of knitting and needlework, mending, patching, embroidery in white and in colour'.⁹⁸ Other visual arts were taught as 'Extras' to fee-paying pupils. The first record of a specialist teacher for drawing is Mother Cecilia Baragetti in 1893. Mother Grazia Conte, a sculptor and plaster worker arrived in 1898. She taught these subjects from 1901 to 1903.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 1.

⁹⁶ Ortaggi, 'Labouring Women', 175.

⁹⁷ RR, 92.

⁹⁸ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 2.

⁹⁹ RR, 86.

The pupils and students of higher education had many opportunities to develop their performance skills including singing, acting, playing instruments and reciting poetry. Fee-paying students were offered piano and solo singing as 'Extras'. When advising Maddalena on finding additional accommodation in 1889, Cabrini wrote that it would be important to find premises with a room suitable for *academie*.¹⁰⁰ Small *academie* were held throughout the year as well as a large one to close the school year. There were more in Rome than in New Orleans or London, due to the many visits by international network contacts from the 1890s. One was arranged on 8th August 1898 for the visit of Bishop Chapelle of New Orleans.¹⁰¹ When pupils performed for the American Countess Spattiswood Mackin, who raised funds for the sisters in Paris, she brought 'a generous treat of sweets' for them.¹⁰² In 1900 there were nine *academie*, including one for the visit of Archbishop Michael Augustin Corrigan of New York. Smaller performances were also held for the feast day of parish priests and the superior. The sisters, pupils and *Magistero* students also contributed to the life of the parishes by singing at mass, particularly on feast days. A highlight was singing before the newly-elected Pius X at a special papal audience in the church of Saints Vincent and Anastasia.¹⁰³

Some teaching students and visitors performed with school pupils, providing role models. On 4th July 1891, for the feast of St Louis, a daughter of the Marchesa d'Ayala Valva 'honoured the occasion playing a

¹⁰⁰ *Epistolario* 1, October 12, 1889, 493.

¹⁰¹ RR, 88.

¹⁰² RR, 93.

¹⁰³ RR, 131.

distinguished piece on the harp accompanied by another young lady'.¹⁰⁴ At the Silver Jubilee celebration in 1906 a trio of *Magistero* students performed Marcetti's *Ave Maria* and Rossini's *Prayer of Moses*.¹⁰⁵ Misses Metella, Dolores and Jolanda Santera performed three items including, Verdi's *I Lombardi*, a trio for the violin, harp and piano. At the end of year *academie* there was input from the dignitary awarding the prizes. In 1902 at Via Sicilia Cardinal Parochi gave 'a discourse on Dante which was a monument to science and his profound wisdom.'¹⁰⁶

There is no reference to physical education. Space for outdoor recreation was considered important. The secretary noted in the Annals that:

A free and open space where the pupils could breathe pure air, run and jump just as they pleased. It was a desire that we had nurtured for a long time but it was never possible to pay for one.¹⁰⁷

They had to wait for 12 years, until Monsignor Campori became patron of the Pontifical School in 1899.¹⁰⁸ On his first visit the sisters raised this 'most urgent need'.¹⁰⁹ Within a few weeks the Bank of Italy donated land adjacent to the school. The houses in Via Montebello and Via Sicilia had courtyards.

Foreign languages were offered as 'Extras' from the outset in the fee-paying schools. Mother Serafina Thomasi, one of the co-founders, knew English, French and German. Mother Stefanina Crivelli, who replaced her, was also an able linguist. By the 1890s, however, languages were taught

¹⁰⁴ RR, 21.

¹⁰⁵ *Trattenimento Accademic*, 7.

¹⁰⁶ RR, 122.

¹⁰⁷ RR, 93.

¹⁰⁸ RR, 93.

¹⁰⁹ RR, 93.

by MSC teaching sisters, who were native speakers. The prospectus pointed out that 'those who attend the *Magistero* enjoy the advantage of conversation lessons in foreign languages'.¹¹⁰ German, and French were offered in 1899, Spanish in 1901.

The only evidence of the teaching of science, history and geography is in Cabrini's travel letters to the *Magistero* students. Writing in 1904 Cabrini told them of Seattle, the garden of the United States, built over 20 hills. It enjoyed constant spring due to a current from Japan, enabling inhabitants to eat strawberries in February. She recounted stories of Lapland, Alaska and the building of igloos. She described the scenery on the trip down to Louisiana across the immense uninhabited plains of Texas. Descriptions filled several pages in 1906. They included: the Denver property at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, the journey past Colorado's rapids, mineral waters and beautiful national parks to Los Angeles and the enormous flowers and vegetables of California. In 1905 she asked Gesuina to make sure that each student had a printed copy of the letter to take home for the holidays.¹¹¹ These appear to have made an impact. In 1918 Professor Antonietta Parrilli, a teacher at the Normal School in Cuneo, recalled letters 'full of information about the places she visited and useful knowledge'.¹¹²

There is also little record of how religious education was taught in the schools. The prospectus for *Collegio del Sacro Cuore* referred to religious instruction and moral education as 'the object of particular care'. A record

¹¹⁰ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 2.

¹¹¹ *Epistolario* 4, May 12, 1905, 425. They were circulated to the MSC convents and to members of the hierarchy and clergy.

¹¹² Professor Antonietta Parrilli, 'Testimonianze', in MSC ed., *In Memoria*, 296.

of the exams in religion in 1899 in the Via Montebello describes a creative pedagogy using poetry and drama for religious education:

The pupils did themselves proud, reciting beautiful religious poetry with much expression and the event finished with a tableau, appropriate to the feast of the day, the Vision of Constantine.¹¹³

The provision for teaching students aimed to compensate for the lack of religious input by the *Magistero*. A student, who gave an address in 1906, referred to 'all the care taken to form our hearts in the faith and the practice of religion'.¹¹⁴ Religious conferences for the students were given by able theologians from 1891.¹¹⁵ Tedeschi gave them every Wednesday in Via Montebello, until he left Rome to become Bishop of Bergamo in 1905.¹¹⁶ In the early twentieth century, Cabrini contributed to the provision through her Travel Letters to the students. She did not write specifically on religion but rather integrated it into advice on women's education and pedagogy. In February 1906 she wrote that a woman should not 'put under a bushel the vivid spark of intelligence which God has given her'.¹¹⁷ On the contrary, the vivid spark became 'a brilliant torch to light the way out of the shadows' in missionaries bearing the love of the Sacred Heart.¹¹⁸ The importance of educating women was emphasised at the 1906 Silver Jubilee celebration in Rome, in November of that year. Professoressa Rosa Vagnozzi gave a discourse on 'The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Education of Women'. She stressed the important role of the young women as 'wise teachers who in their turn

¹¹³ RR, 92.

¹¹⁴ Una Convittrice, Alunna dell'Istituto Superiore di Magistero, 'Indirizzo', *Trattenimento Accademico*, 44.

¹¹⁵ RR, 20.

¹¹⁶ MSC, *Cinquant'Anni di Vita*, 219.

¹¹⁷ Cipolla, *Tra Un'onda*, 546. The reference is to Matthew 5:15, not putting a light under a bushel.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 546.

will give us wise citizens and good mothers and propagate civilisation from generation to generation'.¹¹⁹ A *Magistero* student gave a discourse supporting these arguments. She quoted Napoleon Bonaparte and Édouard René de Laboulaye on the importance of educating women as they form nations and future generations.¹²⁰ In a Travel Letter written earlier in 1906, Cabrini had told the students about making inroads into areas closed to women as the MSC sisters had:

That which as women we are not allowed to do on a large scale such as helping to solve important social problems, we are doing in our small sphere in every state and city in which we have opened houses.¹²¹

In her 1910 letter she reminded the students that their own future would not be 'limited to the modest circle within the domestic walls'.¹²² In 1916 she wrote 'your diploma, the result of your studies and labours will enable you to take up the most important positions in society'.¹²³ She framed this discourse in Christian tradition. She wrote that their progress in science and morals would not only enable each of them to be a 'valiant' educator but also 'the true "strong woman" so lauded in Sacred Scripture'.¹²⁴

A distinctive feature of these letters is the significant input on Catholic pedagogy. With regard to character education, she argued that those formed in 'the love of religion and practice of virtue', central to Catholic educational practice, would benefit the new Italian nation. Silvana Patriarca has shown how the Italian national character and its vices were

¹¹⁹ *Trattenimento Accademico*, 32.

¹²⁰ *Trattenimento Accademico*, 43.

¹²¹ Cipolla, *Tra Un'onda*, 539.

¹²² *Epistolario* 5, December 15, 1910, 222.

¹²³ *Epistolario* 5, December 28, 1916, 575.

¹²⁴ *Epistolario* 5, December 28, 1916, 574.

prominent in national and international discourse in this period.¹²⁵ The Italian government aimed to address Italian vices by educating virtuous citizens.¹²⁶ They did not see the Catholic faith as essential to the process. Indeed, the 1877 Coppino Law had abandoned dependence on Catholic moral teaching proposing a new norm, the 'duties of man' with reference to no particular religion.¹²⁷ This made no sense to Cabrini. Writing to the students in 1904, she argued that love for virtue was rooted in religious experience:

those who have not received the holy impressions of religion in their early years grow up without those notions of its high truth needed to arouse love for virtue and to quell the disordered passions.¹²⁸

Cabrini's reference to 'impressions', indicates her concern for appropriate invisible pedagogy. For her, moral education required more than instruction. She advised the students, 'how much more familiar exhortations and example can achieve compared with sterile and pedantic instructions'.¹²⁹ This is very much in the tradition of a morality of happiness. She followed the example of St Paul, whose epistles she knew well. Servais Pinckaers points to the moral teaching of Paul and the apostles being 'made in the manner of an exhortation among brothers and sisters in the name of the Lord'.¹³⁰ Professor Antonietta Parrilli remembered her letters 'all overflowing with exhortations.'¹³¹

¹²⁵ Silvana Patriarca, *Italian Vices: Nation and Character from the Risorgimento to the Republic*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹²⁶ Fabio Pruneri, *Oltre l'alfabeto. L'istruzione popolare dall'Unità d'Italia all'età giolittiana: il caso di Brescia*. (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2012).

¹²⁷ Geuna, 'Educare l'uomo, il cittadino, il patriota'.

¹²⁸ Cipolla, ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 503.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 547.

¹³⁰ Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 11.

¹³¹ MSC, ed., *In Memoria*, 296.

Cabrini explained that teachers educating pupils in the practice of virtue would need to be 'helped by the grace of the Holy Spirit'.¹³² In this way she brought the doctrine of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, which Christians believe are infused by the Holy Spirit, into pedagogy. On the occasion of the 1912 Silver Jubilee a student expressed her understanding of the need for a personal relationship with God. She wrote that from the Sisters, 'we learn that our heart needs God; because it is weak it should beat continually united to God in faith and love'.¹³³

Cabrini stressed the importance of positive emotions in Catholic educational practice explaining that a religious woman was not expected to 'atrophy her own heart'. Rather, formed in the love central to the Catholic faith, her heart became 'a true volcano of charity embracing everything'.¹³⁴ This is evident in the attitudes displayed by the writer of the Annals. In 1899 she expressed the sisters' delight at the children's enjoyment of their new outside play space. 'Imagine their joy! They seemed like a little nest of lively birds leaving their cage'.¹³⁵ Cabrini considered understanding the need for loving teacher-pupil relationships in character formation, an important part of the *Magistero* provision. She emphasised this in a letter to Leo XIII in 1900, again referring to the impact of feelings and impressions:

the woman who will be a ruination or blessing for the family, for society, for the Church, according to the feelings and the impressions she has received from school.¹³⁶

¹³² Cipolla, *Tra un'onda*, 503.

¹³³ Un'Aluna del Magistero, 'Alla Reverendissima Madre Generale', in Circolare No.19, 20.

¹³⁴ Cipolla, *Tra un'onda*, 546. Cabrini also used the term 'volcano of Charity' in a Travel letter of 1896, *Tra un'onda*, 343.

¹³⁵ RR, 93.

¹³⁶ *Epistolario* 3, February 25, 1900, 241.

In 1912 a student explained that Cabrini and 'our good sisters' had modelled a gentle approach in teacher-pupil relationships. She wrote, 'we see that this education proceeds by the gentle ways of the heart'.¹³⁷

A record of an incident which occurred in 1899 gives an insight into the sisters' commitment to gentleness. At the end of the examinations, one of the Pontifical Inspectors, Professor Battaglini dealt harshly with two pupils. They 'did not deserve to pass due to the little commitment they had shown during the academic year', so a severe approach was taken:

The inspector reprimanded them with such severity in the presence of everyone! He said that if they continued like this we would not be able to continue to keep them in our school; he added that behaving like this in a college and causing division, they were most culpable because they were even more obliged to honour the Institute which had welcomed them with such charity.¹³⁸

The Annals went on to describe the emotional reaction of pupils and sisters as they demonstrated their common concern for the dignity of the individuals. We 'shuddered for the person, hearing him speak in such a robust and severe way'. This resulted in 'everyone in tears amid the general disturbance'. This affected the inspector, as the secretary pointed out, 'he has a father's heart and speaks out of duty not through passion'. As a result he went over to console the pupils, 'encouraging them to make up for the time spent badly in the future'.¹³⁹ The Annals also indicate that the teaching sisters were aware that their classroom techniques were progressive. Recording the visit by government inspectors to the private school in Via Montebello in 1900, the writer noted that when questioned,

¹³⁷ Un'Aluna del Magistero, 'Alla Reverendissima Madre Generale', Circolare No.19, 20.

¹³⁸ RR, 94.

¹³⁹ RR, 94.

the third grade class showed themselves to be 'practised in the modern advances of pedagogy'.¹⁴⁰

Assessment

Cabrini wanted to achieve high standards in Rome. In 1888, a few months after moving into Via Nomentana, she wrote to her brother, also a teacher, 'I believe it can be made into one of the best colleges'.¹⁴¹ The schools' standards were assessed formally by government inspectors and those from the Pontifical Commission, as well as through public examinations. The many visitors attending *academie* assessed the standards informally. Inspectors from the Pontifical Commission for Schools conducted examinations in June or July for the Pontifical Free School. The fee-paying pupils joined with them to benefit from the assessment. Initially there was one inspector and as pupil numbers rose, two. Records for most years noted their 'satisfaction' or 'complete satisfaction'. In 1900 Inspector Camilli and Professor Battaglini approved advancement to the next grade for all pupils.¹⁴² Although employed by the Pontifical Commission they implemented government requirements and in 1903 'Inspector Camilli, following the requirements of the Ministry, passed the pupils who had achieved 7/10 in each subject and 8 in conduct. They all passed'.¹⁴³

The House Annals record only one inspection by government inspectors. It was challenging: 'government requirements for the authorization of

¹⁴⁰ RR, 92.

¹⁴¹ *Epistolario 1*, January 20, 1888, 277.

¹⁴² RR, 106.

¹⁴³ RR, 129.

private schools caused us considerable trouble'.¹⁴⁴ In 1899 government inspectors made two unannounced visits to the fee-paying school in the Via Montebello.¹⁴⁵ The first visit was on 1st May, a holiday. This was only to inspect the building and the inspector was satisfied, in spite of not being able to inspect the registers as they were locked away and the sister with the key was out. He promised to return to inspect the pupils. The secretary expressed the concerns of the teachers, describing their emotions when he arrived unexpectedly:

For a few weeks we were on our guard expecting him at any moment but as the end of the academic year advanced we no longer thought about it as we were absorbed in the imminent examinations. One fine day when the superior was out the inspection was announced. That first proclamation threw the souls of the teachers into agitation there and then; for no matter how much one may be prepared and secure in doing one's duty the best one can, inspections always create a little fear.¹⁴⁶

The inspection went well. The inspector focused on questioning the pupils:

he spent a whole hour questioning them on all the material and made them read some parts and declaring himself satisfied with the method of teaching and the benefits for the pupils he went on to question the children in the third grade who also showed themselves to be good.¹⁴⁷

At the invitation of the sisters he also visited the embroidery school.

Afterwards they asked the inspector to share his observations freely and 'he replied that he was happy with everything and would only advise us to develop a true and prosperous nursery using the Froebel Method'.¹⁴⁸

By the early twentieth century there are records of some pupils sitting public examinations for the *Licenza Elementare*, required for progression

¹⁴⁴ RR, 92.

¹⁴⁵ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 2.

¹⁴⁶ RR, 92.

¹⁴⁷ RR, 92.

¹⁴⁸ RR, 92.

to secondary or technical school and the *Esami di Maturità*, or school leaving exam. They sat them in public schools.¹⁴⁹ Their performance is only recorded in 1899 when it was 'satisfactory enough but not as good as we would have liked.'¹⁵⁰ The *Magistero* students did well in their examinations. Cabrini's obituary in *Osservatore Romano* on 7 January 1918 referred to the students 'getting results splendid enough to deserve the highest certificates of merit even from the government authorities'.¹⁵¹ In her letters of May 1904 and 1905 Cabrini gave practical advice on how to deal with exams, referring to them as '*spauracchio*' or 'bogey', explaining that she used this term as they could take on 'colossal and scary forms'.¹⁵² Her advice was to be calm, trust and pray:

be calm! Place your trust in God. This is not presumption as during the year you have studied as good daughters, so wait in tranquillity for the exams without making yourselves agitated or alarmed.¹⁵³

There was no time to pray at great length so they should pray 'with fervour'.¹⁵⁴

Examinations in religion were conducted annually by the parish priest. The pupils in the free and fee-paying schools sat these separately as they were in different parishes. Prizes were also a feature. They were distributed at the end of year *academie*. The events did not always go to plan. When Parocchi gave the prizes in 1902 he spoke for so long, there was no time left for distribution of prizes. This had to be postponed until the following

¹⁴⁹ 'Collegio del Sacro Cuore', 2.

¹⁵⁰ RR, 93.

¹⁵¹ 'Una Grande Italiana: Francesca Saverio Cabrini', *Osservatore Romano* 7 January 1918 1919 in *In Memoria*, 319.

¹⁵² Cipolla, *Tra u'onda*, 521.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 522.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 522.

day. The directress of discipline at the *Magistero*, Signora Olga Casciani, would also have visited to assess the residence. Writing after Cabrini's death she described the residence as a 'treasure of family affection' for 'those who were far from their families'.¹⁵⁵ The families, members of the aristocracy, clergy and Church hierarchy assessed the standards informally during their visits. In 1891 an *academia* audience included:

His Eminence Cardinal Vicar, Lucido Parocchi; His Excellency Monsignor Sepiacci, Secretary of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, The Abbot General of the Lateran Canons Regular; Parish Priest of Sant' Agnese; other priests; the illustrious Princess of Palazzola.¹⁵⁶

Magistero students gave feedback at the 1906 celebration, in a letter for the 1912 Jubilee and the condolences sent in 1918. They give a positive assessment of their experience both in terms of the pastoral care and the academic and professional support. The *Magistero* student who gave the address at the 1906 celebration thanked Cabrini for an education which 'prepares us to climb the highest peaks of human letters and sciences.'¹⁵⁷ The student who wrote in 1912 described the residence as a 'paradise of happiness'. She wrote of the residence as a 'truly civic work with the aim of forming wise educators and our country will certainly enjoy the great benefits.'¹⁵⁸ She pointed out 'Nobody knows better than us how much we have learnt how much we have grown.'¹⁵⁹ The main aim was, however, for them to be formed as Catholic educators. Feedback on this came from a

¹⁵⁵ La Signora Olga Casciani, 'Letter of condolence' in *In Memoria*, 194.

¹⁵⁶ RR, 21.

¹⁵⁷ 'Indirizzo, Alunna dell'Istituto Superiore di Magistero', *Trattenimento accademico*.

¹⁵⁸ Un'Aluna del Magistero, 'Alla Reverendissima Madre Generale', Circolare No.19, 19-20.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 19.

former *Magistero* Student, who wrote to Cabrini, 'I teach pedagogy, and I have the consolation of knowing that I teach it in a Christian way'.¹⁶⁰

5 3 Implementing Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice in the Community

In Rome the sisters contributed to community education with out-of-hours programmes, teaching in parish churches and home visits. There was no provision for religious instruction for the inhabitants of the new quarters of Porta Pia and Ludovisi and the sisters found that both young and older girls and boys were ignorant of the Catholic faith.¹⁶¹ The sisters developed a new model of Catholic parish with women religious taking responsibility for much of the organisation and education in order to re-evangelise baptised adults and young people not attending their school.

The sisters provided opportunities for girls, teaching students and adult women to develop a fuller understanding of their faith and a deeper prayer life. A branch of the Daughters of Mary was established in the three schools. They met regularly and had annual retreats led by a priest in the convent. In 1903-4 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, they had their own *academia* and over 100 went to a special mass at Saint Mary Major.¹⁶² In 1889 The Congregation of Mothers, Saviours of Religion (*la Congregazione delle Madri Salvatrici della Religione*) was established for mothers. It was led by Sister Paolina Boffa, the cook. Cabrini wrote their Rule.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Quoted in Professoressa Rosa Vagnozzi, 'Le Missionarie del S. Cuore e la Coltura della Donna', *Trattenimento Accademico*, 33.

¹⁶¹ RR, 6; 112.

¹⁶² RR, 134; 142.

¹⁶³ RR, 11.

Students and pupils from outside were made welcome. The sisters hosted The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius Loyola annually from 1891. As well as their own student boarders, teachers and teaching students from other institutes, including those from the Vittorio Colonna Municipal Residence, attended.¹⁶⁴ The Annals noted that these were voluntary and the attendance was good.¹⁶⁵ In 1898 a pupil, who had not attended school, performed in the *academia* at the request of the parish priest. The House Annals describe her as follows:

A truly singular child. Only nine years old and almost deprived of culture as she had not been to school but was taught by her own father, not learned certainly but with a prodigious memory, she knew perfectly 40 verses of the Divine Comedy and recited them with strength and expression in the opinion of those who understood what she said.¹⁶⁶

With the move to Via Sicilia a vocational school opened on Thursdays.¹⁶⁷ Mother Bernardina Bonesana's embroidery classes were popular with the local young women, who 'took part in the needlework school as they wanted to perfect their skills in white and coloured embroidery'.¹⁶⁸

The sisters also established traditional Catholic festivals in their neighbourhoods. Although religious processions were banned in Rome, secular festivals were encouraged by the authorities after 1870. They were representative of a trend identified by Eric Hobsbawm in his work on 'inventing traditions'.¹⁶⁹ Claudia Baldoli points out that in Italy there were

¹⁶⁴ RR, 23; 27.

¹⁶⁵ RR, 43.

¹⁶⁶ RR, 78.

¹⁶⁷ RR, 106.

¹⁶⁸ RR, 129.

¹⁶⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions' in *The Invention*, eds., Hobsbawm and Ranger, 267.

two kinds.¹⁷⁰ One was organised by the municipal authorities, commemorating national unification. As well as these official celebrations there were popular ones which were often anti-clerical, republican and anti-government. From 1888 the sisters organised annual Catholic celebrations for pupils and the wider community. The feast of *Maria Bambina*, the Child Mary, was celebrated with a special mass in September. With the move to their own building in Via Montebello they organised Blessed Sacrament processions in the courtyard.¹⁷¹

The sisters regarded sacramental preparation as real missionary work, describing it as 'dear' and 'beautiful'.¹⁷² They took on as much as was practical, working at weekends and in the evenings in addition to their work in school. They began sacramental preparation in Santa Agnese in 1887 and by 1889 had full responsibility.¹⁷³ They continued this work until the move to Via Sicilia. Three sisters went weekly to Sacred Heart parish from Via Montebello. From 1904 two went to San Camillo, the small parish closest to Via Sicilia. Numbers taught grew rapidly from 45 in 1887-8 to 325 by 1900.¹⁷⁴ Classes took place on Sundays. Lay sisters as well as teaching sisters were involved. There is little information on numbers. In the year 1888 there were 20 male and 30 female first communicants.¹⁷⁵ Numbers recorded for Religious instruction in 1900 are a total of 325.¹⁷⁶ In 1907 there were 160 in Via Montebello and 250 in Via Sicilia.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁰ Claudia Baldoli, *A History of Italy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), 201.

¹⁷¹ Bosworth, *Whispering City*: 129. This continued until the 'economic tolerance' of public Catholicism in the early 20th century.

¹⁷² For example, RR, 58; 138.

¹⁷³ RR, 11.

¹⁷⁴ RR, 6.

¹⁷⁵ RR, 11.

¹⁷⁶ 1900, Prospetto delle Case delle Missionarie del S.Cuore di Gesù.

¹⁷⁷ 'Relazione 1907', 13.

In the Rule Cabrini had given guidance on the kind of pedagogy needed for parish education. She wrote that sisters should treat those attending oratories 'with the utmost charity and loving care'.¹⁷⁸ The writer of the Annals noted that the sisters gained the attention of all the classes with 'an air of gentle gravity'.¹⁷⁹ A group of boys, sent by Father Tommaso Granello OP, appear to have been a challenge. There are no details, as the Rule stated that the sisters should not 'speak in community of the defects of the girls and bury with jealous secrecy what might accidentally be learnt of others' conscience.'¹⁸⁰ Described as 'the most abandoned', however, the record noted that Fr Tommaso Granello OP 'encouraged the Religious on many occasions assuring them that this was a truly good work'.¹⁸¹ They were also given funding to work with these boys. From 1896 Monsignor Tiberghien funded eight day retreats held in the convent to prepare young people from poor backgrounds for Holy Communion, an opportunity rarely available for the poor.¹⁸² In the Rule Cabrini had stressed the importance of dividing large groups for parish education.¹⁸³ The Annals, which go up to 1904, record one or two retreats each year depending on numbers, with groups of between 80 and 100 on each occasion. A priest led the retreat assisted by several sisters.

They established festive oratories to teach Christian Doctrine in the three parishes in which they were resident. Cabrini had also identified festive

¹⁷⁸ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 28.

¹⁷⁹ RR, 6.

¹⁸⁰ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 29.

¹⁸¹ RR, 6.

¹⁸² RR, 95.

¹⁸³ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 30.

oratories as not only a means to educate children but also to protect them from the dangers of roaming the streets. In 1897, the Duchessa Graziola Lente, who shared the sisters' concern to protect the children, provided funding for Holy Communion preparation classes for the poor which also attracted children from 'respectable families'.¹⁸⁴

The sisters made contact with many families through concern for their material needs and in recruiting for the school. In 1891 they opened a soup kitchen and a clothes bank for the poor.¹⁸⁵ In 1903 Epiphany presents were distributed to 300 girls after mass.¹⁸⁶ Community visits for school recruitment meant 'two sisters going from house to house almost every day' in 1897. Cabrini believed that the MSC habit, 'humble, simple and modest whilst not too monastic', contributed to their being welcomed by everyone.¹⁸⁷ The visits provided the opportunity for informal education 'especially with the mothers of families'.¹⁸⁸ The Annals noted the importance of this work to Cabrini:

to restore peace and concord in families, where they give advice and sometimes help to repair or prevent disorder. It is really a missionary sister's work and as such is so dear to the heart of Mother General.¹⁸⁹

Contact with families resulted in many baptisms, more frequent and better prepared reception of the sacraments and the regularisation of marriages.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁴ RR, 58.

¹⁸⁵ RR, 20.

¹⁸⁶ RR, 132.

¹⁸⁷ *Epistolario* 3, undated, 249.

¹⁸⁸ *Epistolario* 3, undated, 249.

¹⁸⁹ RR, 57.

¹⁹⁰ *Epistolario* 3, undated, 249.

The sisters' chapel in the Via Nomentana became the parish church for some and in 1900 Cabrini built the Church of the Redeemer to serve as the parish church in the *Quartieri Ludovisi*. In Porta Pia they were also concerned that the parish church was one and a half kilometres away, which might deter parishioners from attending.¹⁹¹ From December 1887, when daily mass was established in the convent in Via Nomenatana, the Annals note that 'we saw the chapel which was in our care full of people on Sundays'.¹⁹² With the move to the Ludovisi Quarter, Cabrini approached the Pope in 1900 with the proposal to build a chapel adjacent to the school and convent, to serve as the parish church. This was unusual and no similar situation has been identified in work on other congregations. In New Orleans, as will be seen in the case study, the sisters' chapel had been designated the Italian parish church in 1893. Pope Leo agreed and donated 25,000 lire for the Church of the Redeemer. Once it opened numerous parishioners attended to make their Easter duties.¹⁹³

5. 4 Implementing Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice in the Education and Formation of Sisters

In Rome sisters experienced education and formation in pedagogy, character and virtue, modern languages and music. They would have profited from the content of Cabrini's letters to the *Magistero* students on theology, geography and pedagogy. The sources record two occasions when sisters attended courses on pedagogy. In 1900 'Sister Filomena'¹⁹⁴ and Sister Placida¹⁹⁵ on the orders of the Reverend Mother General

¹⁹¹ RR, 7.

¹⁹² RR, 6-7.

¹⁹³ RR, 139.

¹⁹⁴ Sr Filomena Panzi MSC.

¹⁹⁵ Sr Placida Massa MSC.

attended the school to gain the Nursery Teacher's Diploma'.¹⁹⁶ It is likely that this was a course in the Froebel Method, following up the advice from the government inspector the previous year. The sisters were aware of the Method as some of their teacher lodgers followed the Froebel course.¹⁹⁷ James Albisetti has shown how the Froebel Method became popular in Italy due to support from the Ministry of Public Instruction. The Method received criticism from Catholic quarters particularly, *La Civiltà Cattolica*.¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, for the Catholic women religious studied by Rocca, 'the teaching of Froebel was not considered to be at odds with Christian teaching'.¹⁹⁹ Many gained Froebel diplomas including 123 women religious studying at the Saint Catherine Institute in 1890.²⁰⁰ Mother Filomena, aged 34, had taught for over ten years in 1900. When she moved to Via Sicilia as superior for many years she would have been in a position to influence the educational practice of many other sisters.²⁰¹ Sister Placida Massa, aged 20 was in the Rome novitiate, having joined the MSC in Genoa in 1897. After her profession in 1903 she took her new skills to the nursery in Madrid.²⁰²

Cabrini also recognised the potential of the Method of Maria Montessori to assist her sisters in developing the classroom techniques appropriate to Catholic education. In December 1910, she wrote to Mother Gesuina in Rome asking her to 'send as many as you can to the Montessori school'.²⁰³

¹⁹⁶ RR, 108.

¹⁹⁷ *Epistolario* 3, October 18, 1897, 85.

¹⁹⁸ James C. Albisetti, 'Froebel Crosses the Alps: Introducing the Kindergarten in Italy', *History of Education Quarterly*, 49, no2 (2009).

¹⁹⁹ Rocca, 'La Formazione delle Religiose Insegnanti', 438.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 438.

²⁰¹ *Epistolario* 5, 663.

²⁰² She was one of the sisters involved in the 1905 rebellion (see below) and left the MSC in 1915.

²⁰³ *Epistolario* 5, December 17, 1911, 228.

Mother Domenica Bianchi (1865-1961)²⁰⁴ was the most senior participant. Domenica had her *patente* when she entered in Milan in 1887. She was an experienced teacher, administrator and superior who had been a co-founder of schools in the United States, Argentina and Brazil. She was a co-founder and first superior in New Orleans and in 1910 had been superior in London for four years (see chapters on New Orleans and London). The opportunity to attend Montessori training in Rome enabled the sisters to be early adopters of her Method. It is likely that Cabrini became aware of Montessori and her Method through contacts in Rome. Montessori taught at the *Magistero*, between 1900 and 1906, so the *Magistero* students may have brought her work to their attention. Like the MSC, Montessori brought orphans from the 1908 Messina earthquake to Rome. She established a *Casa dei Bambini* for them at the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary Convent on the Via Giusti, where Cabrini and Mother Serafina Tommasi had stayed in 1887. It was there that Montessori held her 1910 and 1911 training courses.

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, who also attended the course, gave some insight into the training that the sisters received. In *A Montessori Mother*, published the year after the course, Fisher wrote of observing a group of about 25 children aged from three to five years engaged on individual activities.²⁰⁵ These included using simple Montessori apparatus to do up and undo buttons or to tie ribbon into bows, as well as preparing the tables for lunch. Fisher was impressed by the freedom given to the pupils and contrasted the Montessori teacher's approach to that of teachers in the United States:

²⁰⁴ 'Note Biografiche', *Epistolario* 5, 675.

²⁰⁵ Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *A Montessori Mother*. (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1912).

I noticed that she happened to stand all the time with her back to the children, feeling apparently none of the lion-tamers' instinct to keep an hypnotic eye on the little animals which is so marked in our instructors.²⁰⁶

The teacher, Signorina Ballerini, whose peaceful demeanour reminded Fisher of a nun, was in fact one of a small group of Montessori supporters who had formed a Catholic sodality, the *Progetto di Unione*, to pursue their educational work in a lay religious community.²⁰⁷ Ann George, who attended an earlier course at the *Casa Dei Bambini* in San Lorenzo, recounted her experience in an article for *McClure's Magazine* in 1912, writing that the course lasted for eight months.²⁰⁸ Although Via Giusti was a walk of about half an hour from Via Montebello, Cabrini wanted the sisters to focus on their training and advised Mother Gesuina to find lodgings near to the school.²⁰⁹

It may seem surprising that Cabrini sent the sisters to the training as Montessori was known to be supported by anti-clerical radicals and masons including Ernesto Nathan. Following her input at the 1908 Italian Womens' Congress in Rome Montessori was criticised by the anti-modernist Catholic press, including *La Civiltà Cattolica*.²¹⁰ On the other hand, in 1910 the *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, founded by Father Agostino Gemelli, (1878-1959) the year before, devoted a positive volume

²⁰⁶ Ibid. , 11.

²⁰⁷ De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio e il Bambino* 81. Padre Pozzi SJ proposed something similar to the student boarders in March 1891, RR, 20.

²⁰⁸ Anne E George 'First Montessori School in America', *McClure's Magazine*, June 26, 1912.

<http://www.digitalhistoryproject.com/2012/06/first-montessori-school-in-america-miss.html> (accessed 05/11/2016).

²⁰⁹ *Epistolario* 5, December 27, 1910, 231.

²¹⁰ De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio e il Bambino* 22. *La Civiltà Cattolica* is a Jesuit publication officially approved by the Pontiff, established by Pius IX in 1850.

to her method.²¹¹ Cabrini and the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary may have perceived the method as ‘Catholic in its very substance’ as did the Spanish visitors described by De Giorgi referred to in Chapter 2. The course may also have provided a much needed opportunity to gain certification, as from 1906 the Pontifical Commission for Education did not allow religious to attend public schools, a regulation which continued until the dissolution of the Commission in 1912.²¹²

A number of sisters learnt foreign languages in Rome. Whilst teachers of foreign languages were important in the fee-paying school from the outset, language skills became necessary for work overseas and for welcoming foreign visitors. In autumn 1888 Cabrini wrote several letters to Mother Maddalena, regarding the sisters learning English. Mother Benedetta Crippa (1869-1893),²¹³ the foreign language teacher in Rome, taught English to the sisters.²¹⁴ The sisters seem to have learnt useful vocabulary. In January 1889 Cabrini wrote, that Sister Concetta was ‘learning the words for food so that as soon as they arrive in America she can cook for them’.²¹⁵ Following the arrival of American Sister Rosa Hogan in 1898, they had a native speaker to teach them. From June 1889 some sisters began to study Spanish to prepare for Nicaragua. Initially Cabrini told Maddalena ‘to find a Spanish grammar book and one for Spanish – Italian conversation at once and in three weeks you will know the language’.²¹⁶ She encouraged her, writing that she herself had learnt to

²¹¹ De Giorgi, *Montessori, Dio e il Bambino*, 31. Gemelli went on to found the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan.

²¹² Rocca, ‘La Formazione delle Religiose Insegnanti’, 434.

²¹³ *Epistolario* 5, 670.

²¹⁴ *Epistolario* 1, December 16, 1888, 395.

²¹⁵ *Epistolario* 1, January 18, 1889, 415.

²¹⁶ *Epistolario* 1, June 16, 1889, 460.

understand it, although was not able to speak it. In her next letter she explained that Spanish is pronounced the way it is written.²¹⁷ In 1890 she instructed Gesuina to employ a teacher.²¹⁸ In 1903 Sister Placida Massa was learning Spanish to prepare for moving to the nursery in Madrid.²¹⁹

For Cabrini, however, the most significant requirement for sisters going to the missions was character education to form them in the practice of virtue. In Rome the sisters experienced character education through the annual and monthly retreats and from Cabrini's advice during visits and in her letters. It was also given informally in the community way of life and the example and guidance of superiors. The House Annals for September record Spiritual Exercises of between eight and twelve days, usually led by a Jesuit, in the summer holidays every year between 1887 and December 1904, except for 1893 and 1894. References to the retreats by the sisters are very positive. In the letter sent out by the community to celebrate the Silver Jubilee they remembered that 'after the tiring demands of the school year they brought us the restoration of spiritual consolations'.²²⁰ In some years the sister secretary commented on the impact made by the priest leading the retreat. After Father Agostino Zagori SJ led the Exercises in 1895, she noted that 'our spirit was lifted and renewed' and in 1897 that he 'helped us in our weaknesses'.²²¹ In 1898, the simplicity of Father Corsi SJ 'made a profound impression'.²²² When he returned in 1901, 'all the religious profited from the exercises which left them well-disposed

²¹⁷ *Epistolario* 1, June, 1889, 464.

²¹⁸ *Epistolario* 1, November 19, 1890, 617.

²¹⁹ *Epistolario* 4, November 20, 1903, 260.

²²⁰ Circolare N.19, 11.

²²¹ RR, 45; 58.

²²² RR, 58.

and ready to follow the way of God'.²²³ Cabrini was present for a one day retreat in Rome in 1890. She included five points that she had taken from it in a letter to Codogno.²²⁴ She explained the central point, a proper understanding of 'fear of the Lord', as 'the product of love, which is born of the fear of offending our good Jesus'. This made those who understood take care not to commit even the smallest sin. Referring to scripture she concluded that this is what made the saints cry out, 'The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord'.²²⁵

As Cabrini herself was on hand for the first seven months of the school start-up she was able to model the kind of leadership and management needed to support teachers implementing her educational practice. She visited Rome many times. Following the transfer of the Mother house from Codogno in 1898, she spent time there whenever she returned to Italy. The Annals refer to her inspirational presence, for example, in 1891 her 'presence brings joy and inspires us to virtue'.²²⁶ In 1918 Professor Ofelia Pinna, a former *Magistero* student, remembered this:

I remember the joy of my good sisters when I was a student in the days when they were expecting their Mother who would arrive indefatigable, affectionate from far away America²²⁷

Most of the time, Cabrini managed through supportive delegation to superiors. Letters to both superiors in Rome show a range of approaches including reminders of how to implement the Rule, frank reprimands coupled with guidance for improvement and words of encouragement and

²²³ RR, 117.

²²⁴ *Epistolario* 1, February 2, 1890, 533-4.

²²⁵ *Epistolario* 1, February 2, 1890, 533. See for example, Proverbs 9:10 and Psalm 111:10.

²²⁶ RR, 19.

²²⁷ Professa Ofelia Pinna, 'Letter of condolence', MSC ed., *In Memoria*, 203-4.

blessing as well as advice on practicalities. In November of 1889, Cabrini wrote to Maddalena regarding an incident with Sister Ancilla Negri (1864-1909), her assistant, highlighting the superior's need for the virtue of compassion:

If you had used the heart of a mother with Sister Ancilla nothing would have happened. A mother has compassion on her suffering daughters and so much more when illness impacts on morality.²²⁸

The MSC Rule of 1881 stated that 'Superiors should treat inferiors with loving care without making them over confident'.²²⁹ Cabrini was frank with Maddalena, aware that if the teachers were to be motherly with their pupils they should experience a similar motherly approach from their superior. She explained the potential positive or negative emotional responses to different treatment by superiors writing, 'a heart is ready to enlarge itself and also ready to close itself and then certainly not follow the charity of the Heart of Jesus Christ, our example'.²³⁰ Writing in 1890 she drew attention to another virtue of Christ, justice, by concluding her letter with the following blessing: 'May good Jesus bless you and enclose you in his Adorable Heart and inspire in you the just way to guide others with justice'.²³¹

An incident in 1904-5 shows how Cabrini supported Gesuina to address a problem, which arose when she was in the United States. Some sisters in Europe complained to members of the hierarchy regarding some of the disciplinary norms of the Institute. They

²²⁸ *Epistolario 1*, November 01, 1889, 512.

²²⁹ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 9.

²³⁰ *Epistolario 1* November 01, 1889, 512.

²³¹ *Epistolario 1*, September 03, 1890, 587.

ignored the MSC procedure for problems which required them to inform Cabrini:

When they see that something is not going well in God according to the Constitutions, sisters should alert the Superior with humility and respect so that she can find a remedy and then if they do not see any improvement, they are required to notify the Mother General.²³²

The Rule encouraged the sisters to write to Cabrini stating that 'the letters will not be read by the directress or anyone else so that they can open their hearts freely'.²³³ Between January and May 1905 five letters from Cabrini to Gesuina addressed the incident.²³⁴ She also wrote directly to the Rome Community in February 1905.²³⁵ The leading protagonists Mother Placida Massa and Mother Diormira Bertelli²³⁶ were both 25 year old teachers. Placida wrote calumnious letters to Domenico Cardinal Ferrata, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops, Archbishop Aristide Rinaldi, Papal Nuncio in Madrid and other Spanish prelates.²³⁷ She may still have been working in Madrid at the time, as she is not listed in the Rome *Memorie* for 1904. Neither is Diormira who joined her in complaining. The incident happened when Cardinal Respighi, Cardinal Vicar of the Sacred Congregation of Regulars, was visiting all religious houses in Rome.²³⁸ Some sisters in Rome also voiced support encouraged by two Jesuits, named by Cabrini in her letter of February 1905, as Benedetto Ojetti SJ

²³² 'Regole dell'Istituto, 35; 'Costituzioni', 18.

²³³ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 35.

²³⁴ *Epistolario* 4, January 28, 1905, 401-2; February 5, 1905, 405-6; February 8, 1905, 409-12; April 7, 1905, 417-8; May 12, 1905 425-7.

²³⁵ *Epistolario* 4, February 5, 1905, 406-7. The matter is also dealt with in the papers for the canonisation, *Novissima Positio super Virtutibus* (Rome: for the Vatican, 1937) and by De Maria, *Una delle sue Figlie, La Madre*, 265-267.

²³⁶ *Epistolario* 5, 746.

²³⁷ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 142. After the investigation by the Vatican these were torn up in Cabrini's presence by Vatican authorities.

²³⁸ *Una delle sue Figlie, La Madre*, 265.

and P.Vittelleschi SJ.²³⁹ Vittelleschi had led the Spiritual Exercises in 1900 and Ojetti in September 1904, the time of the incident.²⁴⁰ The majority of the sisters did not give their support and informed Respighi. The Vatican sent an apostolic visitor, Father Serafino da Collepardo, to investigate. He decided that the accusations were unfounded.

Cabrini's letters indicate that she addressed the incident with persuasion rather than command. Writing to the Rome community in February 1905 she justified the Rule, emphasising that the sisters were called to imitate Christ, not by force but through love as, 'all this is done with love and not force for good Jesus never wants anything done by force in the family of his Divine Heart'.²⁴¹ This required the kind of self-denial and detachment which led to union with God. Cabrini understood 'self-denial' as a product of love, like 'fear of the Lord', described earlier in relation to the Spiritual Exercises. It is the same as that explored by Kate Stogden, in her work on Thérèse Couderc. Stogden points out, in relation to Couderc, that this kind of self-surrender differed from self-abnegation and was rather 'a passionate following of the heart's desire'.²⁴²

Cabrini was frank in describing communities without the kind of disciplinary norms she favoured, as 'vain fantasies' and 'castles in the sky'.²⁴³ She did not force any sister to leave but rather called each to examine her conscience, writing that she forgave them. Sisters Placida and

²³⁹ *Epistolario* 4, February 8, 1905, 409.

²⁴⁰ RR, 107; 139. Ojetti (1862-1932) was a writer.

²⁴¹ *Epistolario* 4, February 5, 1904, 407.

²⁴² Stogden, 'Expressions of Self-Surrender in Nineteenth Century France', in *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality* eds. Lux Sterritt and Mangion, 149.

²⁴³ *Epistolario* 4, February 5, 1904, 407.

Diormira wrote letters of retraction to the prelates concerned.²⁴⁴ They subsequently both left the MSC of their own accord, Diormira in 1912 and Placida in 1915, and started their own religious group, The Missionaries of the People, in Genoa.²⁴⁵ In advising Mother Gesuina, who was dealing with the sisters, Cabrini again recommended a motherly approach, advising ‘be a good mother to all of them’ and ‘have great charity with everyone but expect perfect observance (of the Rule)’.²⁴⁶ By May 1905 she realised that Gesuina was tired and sent advice on headache cures, reminding her ‘never allow yourself to be impatient’ and ‘always have a gentle word on your lips’.²⁴⁷ After the Apostolic visitor had found in Cabrini’s favour she sent her to Genoa for a much needed break in July 1905.²⁴⁸

Conclusion

The education of girls and young women by the MSC in Rome between 1887 and 1917 clarifies Cabrini’s understanding of Catholic educational practice. She did not separate education for personal growth from professional and vocational preparation. She rather used the latter to provide ‘the opportunity to form the heart in the love of religion and the practice of virtue’, as she had stated in the 1881 Rule.

Academic and creative subjects were central to the curriculum in both free and fee-paying schools. The teaching qualifications of the sisters suggest

²⁴⁴ Sullivan notes that Mother Antoinetta della Casa, Cabrini’s successor, told the cause for the beatification that she destroyed the copies of these in 1918. Their letters of apology to Cabrini are extant and were included in the papers for the beatification, Sullivan, 142.

²⁴⁵ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 142.

²⁴⁶ *Epistolario* 4, February 5, 1905, 404-5.

²⁴⁷ *Epistolario* 4, May 12, 1905, 426-7.

²⁴⁸ *Epistolario* 4, July 11, 1905, 442.

that they had the skills to teach these well. This is seen by, for example, the questioning observed by the inspector, creative teaching in religious education and the many *academie*. Attendance at Froebel and Montessori training indicates that pedagogy remained a priority throughout the period. The sisters considered their approach progressive. Teaching with loving care is visible. Sources for Rome from sisters and students refer to 'joy', 'enjoyment' and 'gentleness' as key features. Compassion is also evident. Writing to the *Magistero* students in Rome, Cabrini makes clear the importance she attached to attitudes, impressions and emotions. She understood these aspects of educational practice as emerging from a loving relationship with God. In Rome developing such a relationship was supported by input of both an institutional and intellectual kind, particularly retreats. There were many devotional opportunities to encourage the mystical element of religion. Cabrini also understood the experience of loving relations, lived in community, as crucial here. This is seen in her advice to superiors on dealing with sisters, particularly during the rebellion. In their outreach work in the community in which the majority of their pupils lived, the sisters fostered loving relationships. They did likewise in establishing a family atmosphere with boarders.

Cabrini's practical approach is evident in Rome. It is clear that she and the sisters considered the material environment important and worked to get the best for the pupils. They were, however, prepared to start in less than ideal accommodation with adaptability, optimism and sacrifice. The support of other MSC communities helped. Cabrini recognised that her educational practice depended on support from outside. She therefore established good relations with network contacts and church and civil

authorities. Lay women aristocrats played an important role. The sisters had to prove themselves, however, before any funding was forthcoming from the Diocesan Commission. The wide range of provision was progressive, looking to the future. Cabrini's obituary in *Osservatore Romano* recognised that this prepared the young women for:

Emancipation produced by the war through which women were able not only to work but to supervise in offices, commerce and in the great industries.²⁴⁹

A circular letter sent to all MSC houses to mark the Silver Jubilee of Rome in 1912 saw the sisters in Rome as successors to the original twelve apostles:

Twelve poor fishermen, docile to the urging of the Holy Spirit, converted the world: a chosen group of Missionaries, true daughters of the Institute and the Mother Foundress knew how to revive in souls, faith, piety and charity.²⁵⁰

They were confident that their educational practice succeeded in re-evangelising the baptised, where male clergy and hierarchy had failed. They did not have a sentimental attachment to their foundations in Rome so, like the early apostles, they handed over work in Via Nomentana to another congregation and moved on to new start-ups.

²⁴⁹ 'Una Grande Italiana: Francesca Saverio Cabrini', *Osservatore Romano* 7 January 1918, in *In Memoria*, 319.

²⁵⁰ 'Circular No. 19', 13.

Chapter 6: New Orleans Case Study, 1892-1917

Introduction

Mother Cabrini and the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus went to New Orleans, Louisiana in 1892, in response to the lynching of 11 Italians in 1891. They worked with Italian migrants, almost all of whom came from Sicily. New Orleans was the third MSC foundation in the Americas and the second in the United States. They established an orphanage, free schools and a kindergarten. They later took on the administration of diocesan schools. Their chapel served as the parish church for Italian migrants and they provided formal and informal community education in the city and in the surrounding countryside.

A wide range of sources are available for New Orleans. They include some written by Mother Josephine Lombardi, a co-founder and later superior. Sullivan describes records kept by Mother Josephine as the 'most exact of the extant materials', relating to the history of the MSC in the United States.¹ There are two sets of House Annals. One covers the period from April 1892-October 1900.² A second set give a detailed account of the founding of Sacred Heart Orphanage in the period 1904-6.³ This includes the difficulties with the freemasons of the Italian Colony. An account of New Orleans 1892-1914, was written in 1914. This was for the Silver Jubilee of the missions, probably by Mother Josephine Lombardi, Superior at the time.⁴ There are also personal memories of anonymous sisters and two chaplains, Father Ciolino and Father Teodoro Paroli.⁵ They appear to

¹ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 126.

² 'Memorie 1, Memorie della Casa di New Orleans 1892', 1-45 (M1), AG.

³ 'Memorie Ortranotofio New Orleans 1904' (MO), AG.

⁴ 'Memorie 4, New Orleans – Anno 1892' (M4), AG.

⁵ 'Memorie di New Orleans – n.2'(M2); 'Memorie 3, Missione di New Orleans'(M3), AG.

date from 1918 apart from that of Father Paroli, which is dated January 1954. One sister's account covers the period 1895-1911. The other sister, who arrived with Cabrini, wrote about August 1892. The final account, referred to as the '*Scritti*' or 'writings', was by Mother Domenica Bianchi, the leader of the advance party of three sisters, who went ahead of Cabrini in July 1892.⁶ She was the founding superior and headmistress. In it she copied the 14 instructions, which Cabrini had given her on 'three small loose sheets'.⁷ She gave details of the advance party activities in the month prior to the arrival of Cabrini and four other sisters. Reports required by the Italian Consulate in New Orleans to secure funding give details relating to Sacred Heart Orphanage and the schools from 1906-1918.⁸

Cabrini visited New Orleans seven times between 1892 and 1909.⁹ Many of her letters give details of New Orleans. Two are to Leone Reynaudi, the Commissioner General for Emigration, one written in 1907 and the other in 1910.¹⁰ They give information on Cabrini's understanding of bilingual schools and education for citizenship and Italian identity (*italianità*). The second is particularly helpful with regard to educational practice. In it Cabrini, responding to criticisms of the sisters' work made by a visitor, spelt out the approach of the MSC in some detail. A number of sources provide a perspective from those outside. The General Archive has transcripts of two 1892 articles from the *The Daily Picayune*, covering the

⁶ 'Scritti che riguardano la casa di New Orleans-Louisiana-America del Nord'(Scritti), AG.

⁷ Scritti, 1.

⁸ Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918, CR, D74a.

⁹ in April and August 1892, in May 1895, April 1899, April to July 1904, January to February 1905 and in April 1909.

¹⁰ *Epistolario* 4, July 20, 1907, 621-5; 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910 in Sullivan *Mother Cabrini*, 254-261. The latter is not included in the *Epistolario*.

advance party and the opening of the Philip Street mission.¹¹ There is also a letter from Marie Marguerite Points, dated 23 November 1937, a year before Cabrini's beatification.¹² She wrote about her sister, Marie Louise, a journalist on the *Daily Picayune*. Memories of a pupil and young parishioner are available in an autobiography and a newspaper article.¹³ Alexis Orban, secretary to Cardinal Satolli, included an account of the Cardinal's 1896 visit to the school in his records.¹⁴ A 1906 letter from the consul, Adolfo Rossi, to Leone Reynaudi, the Commissioner General for Emigration, also gives a perspective from an external body.¹⁵ There is also an article by Elenor McMain, the founder and head of Kingsley House Settlement and President of the Woman's League.¹⁶

6.1 Establishing conditions for Mother Cabrini's educational practice

Networks and authorities

Cabrini quickly established good relations with the authorities in New Orleans. She met Archbishop Francis Jansens during her scouting visit. He invited her 'to visit the city and to study the ways and means for opening a house and mission'.¹⁷ The good working relationship continued with his successor, Bishop Chappelle, who took over in 1897. The sisters also benefitted from good relations established by Cabrini with Francesco

¹¹ *The Daily Picayune* July 23, 1892; August 27, 1892.AG.

¹² Marie Marguerite Points to Mother Rose (November 23, 1937), AG.

¹³ Florence L Herman, 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi, CR.; Greco, With *God's Help*.

¹⁴ Alexis Orban, 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans, February 15-21, 1896' in *Documents of American Catholic History*, ed. John Tracy Ellis (Milwaukee: Bruce Pub. Co.1962), 510-526.

¹⁵ 12 April 1906, 'Letter from Adolfo Rossi to On. Ammiraglio L.Reynaudi'. CR.

¹⁶ Elenor McMain, 'Behind the Yellow Fever in Little Palermo, Housing Conditions Which New Orleans Should Shake Itself Free From Along With The Summer's Scourge' *Charities and Commons*,15,(1905): 152-9.

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/America/United_States/Louisiana/New_Orleans/Texts/Yellow_Fever_in_Little_Palermo* (accessed26/06/ 2018).

¹⁷ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 154.

Cardinal Satolli, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. When he arrived in New Orleans, to attend the Catholic Winter School in 1896, his first visit was to the MSC.¹⁸

At least ten congregations, of English, Irish, French or German origins, were present in the city at the time of the arrival of the MSC. New Orleans was also home to a congregation of African American sisters, the Sisters of the Holy Family, founded there in 1842. There was, however, no Italian congregation. The civic authorities in New Orleans appreciated the work of the many women religious in the city. The city showed appreciation for their contribution by allowing them to ride free of charge on public transport.¹⁹ Support for the MSC increased due to the care they gave to the Italian community in New Orleans, during the epidemics of yellow fever in 1897 and 1905.

The Italian Consul in New Orleans is referred to in the Annals as friendly to the sisters. They did, however, encounter the anti-clericalism of Italy reproduced in the diaspora in 1904, when Captain Salvatore Pizzati, an Italian born businessman, who had prospered in the shipping industry, and his wife decided to fund a new orphanage for the sisters. Prominent members of the Italian Colony led by the consul, Fara Farni, made every effort to dissuade Pizzati. They even attempted to trick him into donating the funds to a hospital that the local freemasons wished to establish instead. The sister who wrote the account of the founding of the orphanage noted that they were able to handle the situation as:

¹⁸ Alexis Orban 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 511.

¹⁹ Mary Gehman and Nancy Ries, *Women and New Orleans: A History*. (New Orleans: Margaret Media, 2005), 24; *Epistolario* 2, August 10, 1892, 184.

Mother knew from experience the hostility that the ringleaders of our colony always demonstrate in opposing works entrusted to religious. Mother would say that it almost seemed that for a work to be Italian it had to be masonic.²⁰

Neither Cabrini nor her sisters were *conciliatoristi*.²¹ Peter D'Agostino's description of Cabrini as 'proudly intransigent'²² is brought into question by the reconciliatory approach of the New Orleans sisters, when dealing with individual freemasons. When the donation was settled, Cabrini obtained a papal decoration, The Order of Saint Gregory the Great, for Pizzati. The sisters invited the ecclesiastical authorities and the leaders of the Italian Colony to a public presentation. Initially both sides refused to attend. Fara Farni said:

that as the representative of the Italian government he could not attend a public function in which the Pope as sovereign conferred a chivalrous order.²³

On the day, however, the Auxiliary bishop, Farni and dignitaries from both sides attended.

During her six day stay in 1892 Cabrini extended her network. A number of people 'visited with much kindness'.²⁴ A meeting with Marie Louise Points and her family during Cabrini's scouting visit in April, proved significant in the long term. Marie Louise, a journalist on the *Daily Picayune*, wrote many appeals for Cabrini.²⁵ The first was in an article on the advance

²⁰ MO, 4.

²¹ *Conciliatoristi* supported national political participation by Catholics in Italy.

²² D'Agostino, *Rome in America*, 58.

²³ MO, 16.

²⁴ De Maria, 154.

²⁵ Marie Marguerite Points.

party in July 1892.²⁶ The owner of *The Daily Picayune*, Eliza Jane Nicholson, (née Poitevent, pseudonym, 'Pearl Rivers'), was the first female professional journalist in the South and first woman to be a publisher of a major metropolitan newspaper.²⁷ Women in New Orleans had opportunities not available in other parts of the United States or Europe. Mary Gehman and Nancy Ries point out that the large community of free women of colour from the early years of New Orleans is unique in United States history.²⁸ A number operated street coffee stands. The first was Rose Nicaud who started her business in 1800 after buying her freedom. Gehman and Ries also refer to 'a long history of women in business, politics and social protest'.²⁹ Married women had property rights and, could vote on matters of taxation as early as 1879. It was Mrs Pizzatiti who settled the matter of the donation going to the sisters, rather than the freemasons. The Annals record that 'in New Orleans the wife by law possesses half the goods acquired by her husband after the marriage.'³⁰

Location and Need

The locations of the New Orleans houses are shown on Map 6 on page 216.

²⁶ *The Daily Picayune*, July 23, 1892, AG.

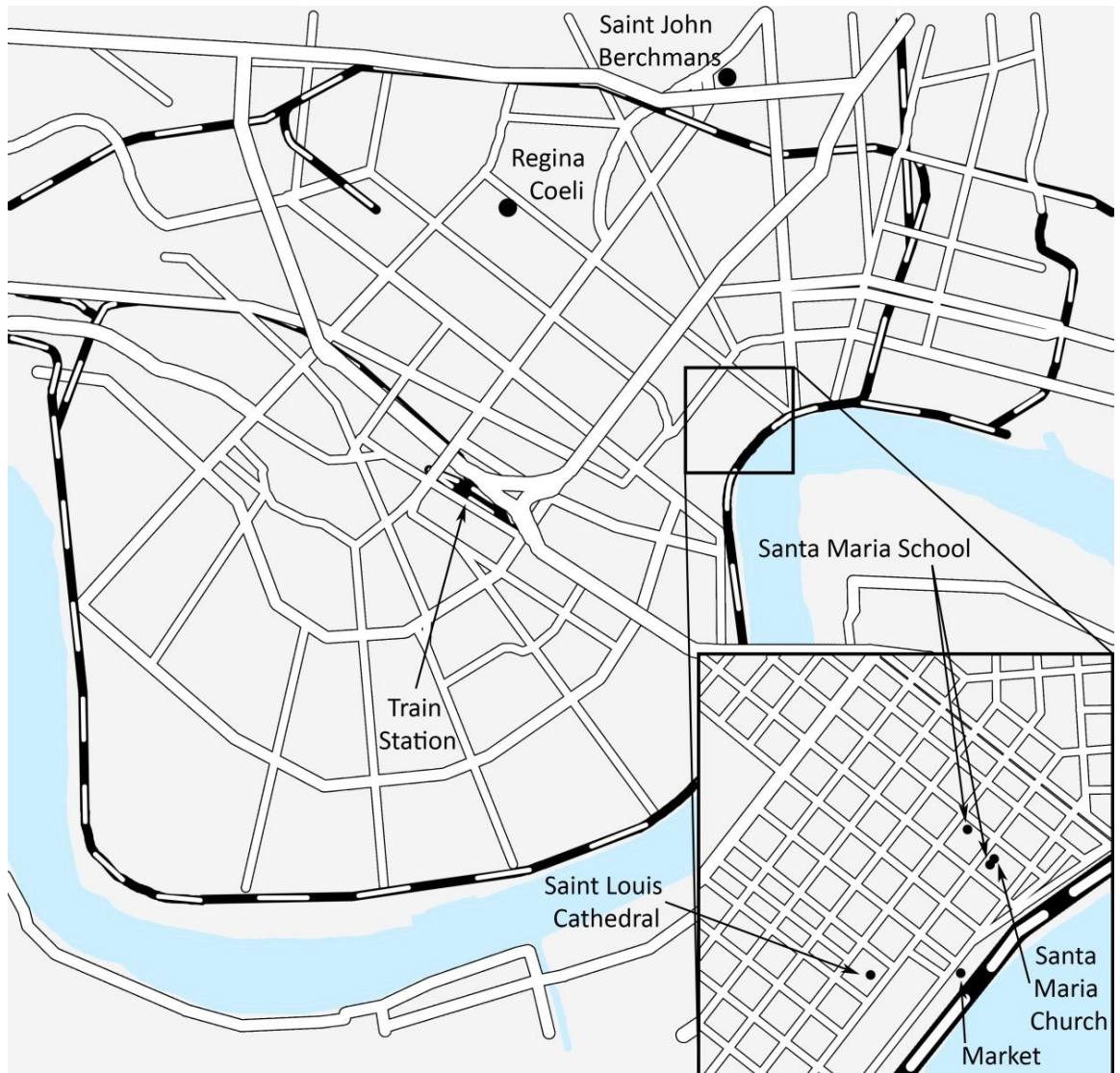
²⁷ Lamar W Bridges, 'Eliza Jane Nicholson and the Daily Picayune, 1876-1896', *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* Vol. 30, no. 3 (1989), 263-278.

²⁸ Gehman, *Women and New Orleans*, ii.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ MO, 12.

Map 6: Locations of New Orleans Houses 1892-1917



Finlay Wojtan, using [OpenStreetMap](#)

Saint John Berchmans, 817 Philip Street,
Regina Coeli, 3400 Esplanade Ave,
Santa Maria School, 620, Hospital Street and 1114, Chartres Street,
Santa Maria Church, 1116 Chartres Street

When Cabrini and the sisters arrived in New Orleans in 1892, the number of Italian migrants was growing, as a result of immigration in the 1880s. In 1890 they numbered 30,000 or ten per cent of the population.³¹ Sicilians comprised all but 62 of the 5,644 immigrants, who came in 1891-2.³² The Italians worked in the docks, mines, and on plantations growing cotton, rice and sugar and as gardeners. Some left families in the city, as they could not take them to their place of work.³³ They also traded and fraternised with the black community.³⁴ A large number were in prison. Cardinal Satolli's secretary, the French Sulpician, Alexis Orban described their plight in his record of the 1896 visit:

Italian immigrants in the United States are generally very poor and suffer intellectual and moral disadvantages which ordinarily accompany poverty. From this fact arises that despising of the Italian name among the mass of the American people.³⁵

De Maria observed that the despising of Sicilians in New Orleans resulted from perceptions derived from popular novels.³⁶ Michael Kurtz has shown that there is no evidence for organised crime or mafia syndicates in the city in this period.³⁷ When the New Orleans Chief of Police was gunned down in 1890, however, the press blamed the mafia and 11 Italians were arrested. In March 1891 they had been tried and acquitted. Whilst awaiting release from prison, they were seized by a 20,000 strong mob, hanged on trees or lamp posts, then shot. It was pre-planned by those

³¹ Richard Gambino, *Vendetta: The True Story of the Largest Lynching*. (Canada: Guernica Editions, 1998, 2nd edition, first published 1977) 49.

³² Gambino, 49.

³³ McMain, 'Behind the Yellow Fever in Little Palermo'.

³⁴ Gambino, *Vendetta*, 56.

³⁵ Alexis Orban 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 511.

³⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 144.

³⁷ Michael L. Kurtz, 'Organized Crime in Louisiana History: Myth and Reality'. *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 24 no.4 (1983): 355-376.

aiming to take over the Italian trade in fruit with Latin America and pressurise Italians to join the White Supremacist front.³⁸ The repercussions on US-Italian relations played out on an international level. The lynching was the largest in US history. Lynching Italians was not uncommon in the United States. In the period 1885–1915, a total of 50 Italians were killed in this way.³⁹

The Daily Picayune identified the need for a civilising influence. The article on the advance party describes the sisters' plans as 'a movement to educate and Americanise the army of emigrants.'⁴⁰ The reporter's account of a visit to the sisters reflects the international discourse on 'Italian vices', explored by Silvana Patriarca.⁴¹ In the courtyard of the building 'a group of squalid looking children and women were seated, talking, mending old clothes or eating fruit lazily in true Italian style'.⁴² Cabrini and her sisters took a different view of their co-nationals. In 1914, a sister remembered them, 'still under the burden of the horror of the atrocious lynching' and 'so abandoned through lack of priests and Sisters of their own nationality.'⁴³

The first house, Saint John Berchmans, was at 817, Philip Street. An orphanage for girls and a school for the orphans and external pupils were established there. It was the main centre for the 14 years until 1906. By 1899, however, overcrowding led to the use of rooms provided by the

³⁸ Marco Rimanelli and Sheryl Lynn Postman (eds), *The 1891 New Orleans Lynching and U.S.-Italian Relations: A Look Back*. (New York: Peter Lang, 1992).

³⁹ M Heather Hartley ; the Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Du Art ; National Film Network ; produced, directed, written and edited by M. Heather Hartley. (2004). *Linciati: lynchings of Italians in America: a documentary*. Lanham, MD: National Film Network.

⁴⁰ *The Daily Picayune*, July 23, 1892, AG.

⁴¹ Patriarca, *Italian Vices*.

⁴² *The Daily Picayune* July 23, 1892.

⁴³ M4, 1.

Archdiocese in a former seminary in Hospital Street.⁴⁴ Classes for the older boys moved there and a mixed kindergarten was established. It was known as Santa Maria. By this point orphans were being turned away.⁴⁵ In 1906 the orphans transferred to the purpose built Regina Coeli Convent and Sacred Heart Orphanage and School at 3400, Esplanade Ave. Today Cabrini High School, maintained by the MSC, occupies the site. The boys' school then returned to Philip Street. In 1911 the sisters agreed to take on the administration of the diocesan schools, Santa Maria or Saint Mary's, at 620, Hospital Street and 1114, Chartres Street. They took their pupils with them. Philip Street became a day-care centre and kindergarten. Like the Chapel in Via Sicilia, Rome, the chapel in Philip Street served as a parish church. From New Orleans, they established country homes for holidays and the sick orphans, extending their work to Long Beach in the state of Mississippi in 1899.

Accommodation, Resources and Funding

The advanced party lodged in two rooms at 817, Philip Street, 'in one of the most densely populated Italian centres of the city'.⁴⁶ Cabrini arrived on 3rd August 1892 with four more sisters. Seeing the potential of the large building with a courtyard, she purchased it. Mr Marioni, a distinguished lawyer, gave his time and labour without cost. The convent opened formally on 26th August and the *Daily Picayune* reported that 'there was light and joy in the old tenement house'.⁴⁷ Providing appropriate accommodation for the school, orphanage and convent was a

⁴⁴ M1, 140, sometimes referred to as Santa Croce, as the Santa Croce Sisters had used the building.

⁴⁵ M4, 9.

⁴⁶ M2, 26.

⁴⁷ *The Daily Picayune*, August 27, 1892.

continual challenge for Cabrini and her sisters. Reporting on the opening of the house on Philip Street, The *Daily Picayune* described the accommodation as 'one of the grandest homes of the old faubourg' and reported that it would 'be renovated and repaired and thoroughly equipped for school purposes and an orphanage'. The annals recorded that the sisters carried out the renovation, 'working all day and a good part of the night'.⁴⁸ A sister remembered that they did all kinds of work 'be it carpentry, manual work or painting'.⁴⁹ The community also profited from the farming background of some sisters. After a year they were harvesting the grapes they had grown in their garden and made their own communion wine.⁵⁰

The accommodation provided by the Diocese in 1899 comprised two enormous rooms in a Hospital Street building. In the twentieth century the accommodation was purpose built. The Sacred Heart Orphan Asylum building at 3400, Esplanade Avenue, was described as 'one of the grandest and most beautiful in the city'.⁵¹ Cabrini bought the land. Benefactors, Captain and Mrs Pizzati referred to earlier, funded the building. As well as class rooms and dormitories, the facilities included 'the annexe which serves as an infirmary in cases of contagious illnesses'.⁵² This was important, as serious outbreaks of yellow fever in the city resulted in 298 deaths in 1897 and 437 in 1905.⁵³ In 1911 the schools moved into the

⁴⁸ M1, 8.

⁴⁹ M 3, 3.

⁵⁰ M1, 71.

⁵¹ M4, 10.

⁵² Josephine Lombardi, 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini', August 28, 1914.

⁵³ Yellow Fever Deaths in New Orleans, 1817-1905, <http://nutrias.org/facts/feverdeaths.htm>, (accessed 24/06/2018).

‘new vast Cathedral school’ provided by the Archdiocese.⁵⁴ Benefactors helped Cabrini to provide a holiday home at Orchard Springs, Long Beach, Jackson, Mississippi on the Gulf of Mexico in 1899. A second house at Long Beach, dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, was opened in 1903. These were also used to evacuate some sisters and orphans during the outbreaks of yellow fever.

The advance party of sisters brought books and religious objects.⁵⁵ The sisters in New York also sent a large statue of the Sacred Heart.⁵⁶ The word ‘*regalo*’ meaning present appears frequently in the Annals. Other congregations assisted, as they had when Cabrini arrived in New York in 1889.⁵⁷ The Ladies of the Sacred Heart gave the tabernacle.⁵⁸ The Sisters of the Poor sent flowers and linen for the altar.⁵⁹ The superior of Santo Stefano donated a very large statue of The Virgin Mary.⁶⁰ The Padre Mannorita sent candlesticks and a cross for the altar. A ‘good Protestant man’ gave some tapestry which the sisters managed to hang in the sanctuary of their chapel.⁶¹ The Sisters of Charity provided desks as the school opened.⁶² The Annals noted, however, that there were not sufficient and they hoped to have one for each pupil soon.⁶³ A harmonium was borrowed from the Italian church for the consecration of the chapel and musical instruments were lent for the end of year academia of June

⁵⁴ M2, Paroli, 27.

⁵⁵ *Daily Picayune*, July 23, 1892.

⁵⁶ *Epistolario* 2, August 08, 1892, 177.

⁵⁷ Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 80-81.

⁵⁸ M3, 4.

⁵⁹ M1, 9.

⁶⁰ M1, 14.

⁶¹ M1, 9.

⁶² M1, 11.

⁶³ M1, 13; 98.

1894.⁶⁴ When the school opened for the third academic year on 3rd September 1894 the Annals recorded, 'this year we were able to do everything ourselves no longer having to look for external help.'⁶⁵ The sisters provided books and stationery for the children.⁶⁶

The sisters, who had cooked for themselves and the orphans in the courtyard, were presented with a gas stove by Father Gambera in November 1892.⁶⁷ The market traders in Decatur Street were generous to the sisters who begged there. Mrs Josephine Cangelosi remembered them being so laden with heavy baskets that her uncle Joseph Schiro gave them a mule and Peter Lamma, of the funeral home, gave a cart for transport.⁶⁸ Supporters also gave generously for special occasions like the visit of Cardinal Satolli. Orban wrote that 'after holy Mass we had breakfast which, thanks to the generosity of benefactors, was more like a full dinner'.⁶⁹

The July 1892 article in the *Daily Picayune* referred to 'all classes of the community' supporting the new foundation:

the Americanising and elevation, moral and intellectual, of Italian immigrants are works in which all classes of the community will co-operate.⁷⁰

Cabrini noted in a letter before leaving on 28th August that the first school would be for the poor 'with which the city has so generously helped us'.⁷¹

⁶⁴ M1, 98.

⁶⁵ M1, 102.

⁶⁶ 'To Commissioner General', 1907.

⁶⁷ M1, 18.

⁶⁸ Florence L Herman, 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi'.

⁶⁹ Alexis Orban 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 516.

⁷⁰ *The Daily Picayune*, July 23, 1892.

⁷¹ *Epistolario* 2, Fine Agosto 1892, 192.

Generating regular income, however, was a continual struggle. The sisters relied on charitable contributions, subsidies and benefactors. Sister Helen and Sister Angelina spent their first days visiting the Italian community in the city collecting alms ‘but it resulted in almost nothing.’⁷² From 15th October 1892 they extended their visits to the countryside. Whilst these contributions were small, they had loyal supporters ‘with good hearts’. One lady gave a dollar every month to Sister Angelina. On 26th May 1893 she called at Philip Street with her contribution as Sister Angelina had not visited her that month.⁷³ In the early days Cabrini advised Domenica to give piano lessons and take in boarders as they did in Italy.⁷⁴ There is no record of her doing so. It is unlikely that there would have been a demand among the poor migrants. In August 1893 Archbishop Janssens wrote on behalf of the sisters asking the *Propaganda Fide* for financial support.⁷⁵ There is no record of any contribution. Grand visitors made cash donations. The Duca degli Abruzzi, a member of the Italian royal family and an explorer who circumnavigated the globe, visited in November 1903. He donated \$1000.⁷⁶ Pizzati’s donation of \$75,000 in 1904 was the largest single donation Cabrini ever received. In the early twentieth century the situation improved. By 1907 the school in New Orleans was receiving an annual government subsidy of 700 lire and a \$600 subsidy from the Commission for Emigration for the orphanage.⁷⁷ By 1910 there was an income of 80,500 lire and expenditure of 79,910.⁷⁸ With the move

⁷² M1, 2.

⁷³ M1, 51.

⁷⁴ *Epistolario* 2, March 29, 1893, 265.

⁷⁵ M1, 68-9.

⁷⁶ M2, 4.

⁷⁷ ‘To Commissioner General’, 1907.

⁷⁸ 1910 Relazione.

to the Cathedral School in 1911 seven sisters received salaries from the Archdiocese.

Recruitment

Cabrini knew from the experience in Rome and New York that personal contact was important for recruiting. She advised the advance party to get to know potential pupils and their needs by visiting their homes and organising oratories. *The Daily Picayune* reported that foreign nuns were 'making friends among the Italian quarters of Ursulines and Hospital Streets'.⁷⁹ Domenica organised an oratory in Father Gambera's chapel from their first Sunday in the city.⁸⁰ In this way the pupils and families had a taste of the sisters teaching methods. Gambera announced the opening of the new school at Sunday mass.⁸¹ Pupils were recruited more quickly than in Rome or London. Cabrini had advised the sisters to expect no more than 40 -50 pupils in the first year. 34 pupils enrolled within the first hour of the school opening at 8.00 am on 5th September.⁸² Numbers rose to 76 within two weeks, with two orphans admitted. A lay volunteer, Miss Egan, who knew the sisters in New York, arrived to join them as a volunteer. Her expertise was an attraction. On 15th September 1892 the secretary noted that 'our good teacher really knows how to attract the children, who hope to learn a much better English here than in the public schools'.⁸³ In the years that followed, the sisters had difficulty keeping up with the demand. Teaching pupils to write in Italian was also an attraction. It was considered 'a great advantage to their families who are able to have a means of

⁷⁹ *Daily Picayune*, July 23 1892.

⁸⁰ Scritti, 2.

⁸¹ M1, 10.

⁸² M 1, 10-11.

⁸³ M1, 12.

communicating with their dear ones in Italy'.⁸⁴ A sister recalled that as time went by former pupils, 'many of whom are now mothers, do us the honour of sending their children to the school they once attended themselves'.⁸⁵

The Founding Community

Cabrini left after just over three weeks, delegating the work of starting up the school to six co-founder sisters and Miss Egan. They are shown in Table 12, on page 226. Two of the three sisters in the advance party remained, Mother Domenica Bianchi (1865-1951), the 27 year old superior, and Angelina Rettagliata, (1871-1962). The third, 17 year old New Yorker, Sister Helen, returned with Cabrini due to her health. Mother Josephine Lombardi (1865-1934), who had been due to return with Cabrini, replaced her. The others were Mother Alacoque Sartori, (1873-1935), Mother Diormira Pagliani, (1869-1940) Sister Natalina Cicognini, (1871-1937). Their ages ranged from 19 to 27. The average age was 22, making them younger than the Rome and London co-founders.

⁸⁴ 'To L Scelsi, Italian consul in New Orleans 26 June 1907 for the year 1906'.

⁸⁵ M2, 14.

Table 12: New Orleans Co-founders 1892

Name	Age	Born	Education	Role
M. Domenica Bianchi	27	Milan	P	Superior
M. Angelina Rettagliata	21	Genova	N	Collection
M. Alacoque Sartori	19	Milan	P	T
M. Diomira Pagliani	19	Bergamo	E	English T
S. Natalina Cicognini	21	Sant'Angelo	N	Cook
M. Josephine Lombardi	27	Cuneo	E	French, Art T

Sources: *Epistolario* 5, 621-753.

Key: E-Well-Educated, M-Mother, N-No record, P-*Patente*, S-Sister, T-Teacher

Four of the six were well educated women from Lombardy. Cabrini referred to bringing the 'patente' documentation for Mothers Domenica and Alacoque, when writing in advance of her journey to New Orleans in July 1892. Mother Diormira Pagliani is referred to as 'the English teacher'. Mother Josephine Lombardi, who entered in Rome, came from a cultured family background. Her brother worked at the Holy See with Fr Tomaso Grumello OP, who had helped Cabrini gain approval for the Institute. As Sisters Angelina and Natalia spent their days out collecting, the teaching sisters had to do cleaning and cooking after school until Mother Battistina Cigala and Sister Maddalena Brady arrived at the end of September and 'played the part of Martha'.⁸⁶ The writer of the Annals commented good-humouredly that 'neither simplicity nor appetite were lacking'.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ M1, 13-14. A reference to Luke 10:38-42.

⁸⁷ M1, 1.

A room in Philip Street was made into a chapel as a priority. It was blessed on 15th August 1892 and the Blessed Sacrament reserved. Father Gambera served as chaplain and the sisters were able to have daily mass from the outset. The new convent which opened in Esplanade Avenue in 1906 had a purpose built chapel.

6. 2 Implementing Mother Cabrini's educational practice In the Schools Pupils, Staffing and School Organisation

Pupils

In the early days both orphans and school pupils were all either born in Italy or from Italian families. This continued in the orphanage in the early twentieth century. In 1908 all except two orphans were from Italian families and in 1909 it was one.⁸⁸ In 1913 all orphans were Italian.⁸⁹ In the schools it was different. In the years 1910-11 and 1911-12 the number of pupils who were not Italian grew. In 1910-11 of a total of 479 pupils 38 (8%) were not Italian.⁹⁰ By 1913-14 the proportion had increased significantly. 122 of a roll of 670 (18%) were not Italian.⁹¹ Throughout the period the Italian pupils were from Sicilian families. Mother Josephine noted in 1914 that the pupils 'being almost all Sicilians speak a dialect in their families and have almost no English'.⁹² Donna Giabaccia makes the point that not only did Italy's many Diasporas reproduce the regions of Italy, but often members of migrant communities were from neighbouring towns and villages.⁹³ The area where the MSC settled was known as Little

⁸⁸ 'Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918', CR, D74a.

⁸⁹ 'To Inspector of Commission for Emigration New York', 28 August 1913.

⁹⁰ 'Reports to the Italian Consulate'.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Josephine Lombardi, 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini', 28th August 1914.

⁹³ Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (London: UCL Press, 2000), A recent BBC series showed that this was the case in Wales. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries approximately 80 % of Italian

Palermo. Captain Pizzati was born in Palermo. The family of pupil Charles Pasquale Greco (1894-1987), who later became a bishop, came from Cefalu, along the coast from Palermo, as did Father Vincenzo Ciolino, who served as chaplain for many years. Whilst the orphanage provided for girls, boys attended the school from the outset. It is likely that all pupils were Catholic. There is certainly no reference to pupils who were not Catholic.

A good deal of data is available on the female pupils boarding in the orphanage in the reports to the Italian Consul of early twentieth century. The total number of orphans cared for annually changed very little in this period ranging from the lowest figure of 98 in 1906 to the highest of 122 in 1907. The girls in the orphanage were there for various reasons. The 1907 report explained that each had 'a painful story, because in spite of being more or less young, they have already experienced the painful vicissitudes of life.'⁹⁴ Some had lost parents to yellow fever and others had been abandoned.⁹⁵ Those who had lost both parents, however, were the minority. Table 13, on page 229, shows that the majority had lost their father. This was most probably in 'work-related accidents' referred to by Cabrini.⁹⁶ Most orphans were therefore returned to their families:

The majority of the orphans are returned to their families at a suitable age. Others are placed in good families where they can earn an honest living and find a modest position.⁹⁷

immigrants came from Bardi, near Parma. Phil Carradice 'The Italians in Wales', Monday 22 October 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/wales/entries/fdcff8e1-66dc-34e2-b279-a6e7280958cc> (accessed 01/03/17).

⁹⁴ 'To L Scelsi, Italian consul in New Orleans' 26 June 1907, Reports, CR.

⁹⁵ 'To the Italian Consul in New Orleans', 1 Jan 1907, Reports, CR.

⁹⁶ *Epistolario* 4, July 20, 1907, 622.

⁹⁷ 'To the Italian Consul in New Orleans', 2nd April 1916, Reports, CR.

Table 13: Status of Orphans, New Orleans, 1912-14

Status	1912	1913	1914
No father	53	46	52
No mother	27	26	27
Neither father nor mother	21	9	17
Not orphans	11	20	21
Total	112	101	117

Source: The Italian Consul in New Orleans, 2nd April 1916, Reports, CR.

Table 14, on page 230, shows the orphanage numbers with in-year admissions and departures. The mobility rate was high. There is no reference to high pupil mobility in the school. The pupils may have continued in the school with the sisters, providing some stability. Pupils who were not resident in the orphanage, however, had their education disrupted due to financial hardship. Poor attendance is mentioned in several reports to the consulate. In the last two months of the summer term of 1913 'numbers attending fell due to strawberry harvest for which as is well known many Italian families leave the city for some time.'⁹⁸ During the winter months of 1915 many pupils were ill.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ 'To Vice Consul Sig Cav Papini', 30 June 1913, Reports, CR.

⁹⁹ 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini' 18th October 1915, Reports, CR.

Table 14: Orphanage Numbers 1906-17, showing in-year admissions and departures

Date	1st Jan	Entered	Total	Left	Total
1906	64	36	100	20	80
1907	80	42	122	45	77
1908	77	42	119	21	98
1909	98	33	131	23	108
1910	103	24	127	33	94
1911	94	48	142	35	107
1912	107	46	153	41	112
1913	112	42	154	53	101
1914	101	46	147	30	117
1915	117	39	156	39	117

Source: Reports to the Italian Consulate, 1906-1916, 'Reports' CR.

Table 15, on page 231, gives a breakdown of orphan numbers by age. Not all totals agree with those in Table 14 as the numbers in the original reports do not always agree. This may be due to them being sent at different points in the year. They show that the ages of the orphans ranged from 2 to 15 years. From 1906 to 1908, the majority were in the 7 to 12 years group. From 1912 to 1915, however, the majority were in the 2 to 7 years group. There was no set age for them to leave and they remained until a suitable progression opportunity arose. This was, as Cabrini pointed out in a 1913 report to the Holy See, 'contrary to the American custom of discharging girls at the age of fourteen'.¹⁰⁰ This would explain the wording '15 or older'.

¹⁰⁰ 'All' Eminentissimo Signor Cardinale', March 10th 1913, 5.

Table 15: Orphan Numbers, New Orleans, 1906-17: Breakdown by Age

Date	2-7 years	7-12 years	12-15 or older	Total
1906	26	46	26	98
1907	29	52	41	122
1908	31	52	36	119
1912	57	29	16	102
1913	51	28	22	101
1914	58	30	29	117
1915	48	35	24	107

Source: Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918, 'Reports', CR

The commitment of the sisters to girls from poor families completing their education is evident, as it was in Rome. This was summed up in a report of 1911:

Our aim is not only to feed and clothe them but even more to impart such education as is necessary to make them useful not only to themselves but also to their families, to society and to honour our dear homeland.¹⁰¹

The sisters refused to discharge girls if they believed that it would interfere with their education. Correspondence with the Consulate in 1915, in relation to the Passante sisters, Carmela and Anna, provides an example. Signor Scala had written from the Consulate following a visit from the girls' mother Antonia Cottone. She wanted her daughters to return home, but the sisters had not discharged them.¹⁰² Signor Scala used the word '*fanciulle*' or 'young ladies'. In her reply the Superior refers to them as '*bambine*', or 'little girls' and makes clear that they will not discharge them until they complete their education:

It is not the custom of our Institute to send children to their parents until they have completed their education; particularly when they have been growing up in the orphanage from the tenderest age. The two Passante

¹⁰¹ 'To the Italian Consul 30 Feb 1911', Reports CR.

¹⁰² 'To Rev Mother Superior from L Scala, Regio Agente Consolare', 9th September 1915, Reports, CR.

sisters have been with us for seven years without a single contribution from their mother.¹⁰³

The girls were of an age when they might have found work or certainly worked in the home. The orphanage finances were tight and there was a need for places. The incident indicates a commitment to girls completing their education, similar to that demonstrated in Rome.

Staffing

The majority of teachers in New Orleans during this period were Italian or Italian American. There were also some Irish Americans. The six co-founder sisters were all Italian migrants. Unlike their neighbours in Little Palermo, they were from Northern Italy. Mother Angelina Rettagliata was 21 years old. She had emigrated with her family from Genoa to the United States, as a young child and entered in New York.¹⁰⁴ Mother Domenica Bianchi was from the area outside of Milan and was called to New York in 1889. The other four sisters were from Lombardy and had come to the United States in 1891. Mother Battistina Cigala (1866-95) who arrived in September 1892 was also from northern Italy. Throughout the period the majority of sisters in New Orleans were Italian or of Italian origin.

Postulants who entered in New Orleans were, like the majority of Italian speaking sisters who entered in the United States, from Southern Italy.¹⁰⁵

The Favalaro sisters who entered in 1894 were from Palermo. Sisters born in the United States were also present from 1892. The first was Sister Helen of the advance party who returned with Cabrini. Sister Maddalena Brady (1872-?), who arrived with Mother Battistina, was a New Yorker.

¹⁰³ 'To Ill. Signore, 14th September 1915', Reports, CR.

¹⁰⁴ *Epistolario* 5, 697.

¹⁰⁵ Sullivan estimates that in 1917 of 300 Italian speaking sisters in the United States half were from Italy and half from the United States, Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 104.

There was also an American born lay teacher from the outset. The Annals record on 5th September 1892 that 'a good English teacher, Miss Egan has been with us for about two weeks, she came specially from New York in order to help the school'.¹⁰⁶

The climate of New Orleans had an impact on staff mobility from the outset. Sister Helen was not able to remain as a co-founder as planned because her health was badly affected by the air in New Orleans.¹⁰⁷

Mother Maddalena Martinelli served as superior for less than a year in 1899-1900 returning to Chicago for health reasons. In February 1893 there was a staffing crisis, when Mother Domenica and Alacoque were ill and Miss Egan was called back to New York when her mother was taken ill. Mother Bernardina Vallsineri, who oversaw the work in the United States, came to stay, taking the role of nurse. Classes were covered although not by experts. Bernardina's companion, Sister Agnese who 'had never been used to being in school', taught the older boys.¹⁰⁸ Sister Maddelena Brady, a lay sister, taught English to the younger pupils and an orphan replaced her on the collection with Sister Angelina.¹⁰⁹ Miss Egan proved difficult to replace. Her successor was dismissed after a few days.¹¹⁰

In New Orleans there were more changes of leadership than in Rome. There were five superiors in the 25 years between 1892 and 1917. The community seems to have enjoyed stability nevertheless, as they were able, experienced, women. Apart from one, all stayed at least three years.

¹⁰⁶ M1, 10.

¹⁰⁷ M1, 7.

¹⁰⁸ M1, 35.

¹⁰⁹ M1, 38.

¹¹⁰ M1, 42.

Mother Domenica had not been a superior before, unlike Mother Maddalena Savaré in Rome. She was, however an alumna from Milan like Mother Gesuina Diotti so had experienced MSC educational practice as a student. Domenica was moved to be founding superior in Buenos Aires in 1895. Cabrini replaced her with Mother Bernardina Vallsineri. This gives an indication of the demands of New Orleans. Mother Bernardina, referred to in chapter 4, was an experienced superior and 40 years old. She had been founding superior in Castelsangiovanni, Italy and in New York. In 1899 Mother Maddalena Martinelli replaced Bernardina who was needed in New York. She stayed only a year due to illness. Mother Carolina Bertoli (1871-1942) arrived, aged 29, in 1900. Carolina had been superior in Chicago. After three years she was called to found the first fee-paying school in New York. She was replaced by 38 year old Mother Josephine Lombardi who remained from 1903 until the end of the period. She had been a co-founder, moved and then returned. She knew the foundation well.

School Organisation

In the seven years from 1892 to 1899 the roll rose rapidly from the original 76. The number on roll is not recorded in the Annals, as it was in Rome. There is, however, a description of the overcrowding in Philip Street at the start of the school year 1899-1900. The secretary wrote of 'the dire straits we were in, such that some of the children were obliged to stand up because there were not enough places'.¹¹¹ It was at this point that the Archbishop gave the sisters use of the rooms in Hospital Street.

¹¹¹ M1,140.

Table 16: Pupil Numbers by Gender, New Orleans 1905-15

Date	M	F	Total
1905-6	225	260	485
1906-7	200	300	500
1907-8	160	270	430
1908-9	N	N	478
1909-10	N	N	446
1910-11	226	213	439
1911-12	260	290	550
1912-13	300	250	550
1913-14	330	340	670
1914-15	330	370	700

Key: N-No record

Source: Source: 'Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1916', CR.

Table 16, above, gives details of the school roll taken from the reports to the Italian Consul. The roll ranged from 430 to 550 in the years from 1905-6 to 1911-12. Following the amalgamation of the MSC and Cathedral School the roll rose again. It reached 700 in 1914-15. During the period 1905-15 there were also at least 100 in the orphanage school (see Table 14, page 230). The overall number of pupils taught in New Orleans by 1915 was 800. These totals were significantly higher than in Rome. The highest roll recorded there was 400 in 1907. The roll of 300 in the free school in Via Sicilia was comparable to the rolls in New Orleans. The roll of 100 in the fee paying school in Via Montebello was much lower. The number in an individual school was comparable at around 300. In Rome, boys made up a very small proportion of the roll. In New Orleans, however, the numbers are comparable. They are shown in Table 16 for all but two years.

Table 17: Number of Sisters, New Orleans, 1892-1910

Date	Philip St	Esplanade Ave	Total
1892	9	n/a	9
1907	12	18	30
1910	12	22	34

Sources: 'Memorie 1'; 'Relazione 1907'; 'Relazione Triennale dell' Instituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù Dal 1907– 1910', AG.

Table 17, above, shows the number of sisters in New Orleans. In response to the numbers in the first term there were five teachers, Josephine, Alocoque, Diormira and Domenica along with Miss Egan. Sister Natalia, a lay sister, taught cooking. By April 1893 there were two lay teachers. As pupil numbers rose in the early years of the twentieth century, the number of sisters more than trebled by 1907. This number included lay sisters working to support the school as well as teaching sisters. The sisters in Esplanade Avenue also dealt with the demands of over 100 orphan boarders. The ratio of sisters to pupils changed significantly in this period. In 1892 there were nine sisters with 76 pupils, giving a ratio of 1 to 8. In 1910 there were 34 for 566 pupils, giving a ratio of 1 to 17. The numbers do not include lay teachers. In the early days the sisters had the additional demands of the start-up. The early twentieth century brought new demands. The high orphan mobility rate would have resulted in additional time spent inducting pupils and supporting their progression during the school year.

Table 18: Classes in New Orleans in 1915 and 1917

Classes	1915		1917	
	M	F	M	F
Preparatory	49	37	60	70
Grade 1	42	57	40	45
Grade 2	40	37	37	43
Grade 2	35	37	30	36
Grade 3	42	35	37	45
Total	208	203	204	239

Source: Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918, CR.

Table 18, above, shows the class sizes given in reports for 1915 and 1917. There are no class sizes recorded prior to 1915. In 1892, however, there were five teachers for 76 pupils giving an average class size of 15. The class sizes are given in reports for 1915 and 1917 and shown in Table 18. Class size ranged from 35 to 70 pupils. The average size almost trebled, increasing from 15 to 41 in 1915 and to 44 in 1917. By that time the sisters would have established their procedures and routines and knew the pupils and their families. Nevertheless it was a large increase. The classes were organised by grades, as in Rome. Pupils in them would have been of different ages. Again as in Rome, a lower proportion of pupils were in the upper grade. There were two grade two classes, suggesting that many did not progress to grade 3 with their peers. This may well have been the result of the late entry and language ability of bi-lingual learners.

2.2 Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

Curriculum

The curriculum in New Orleans was informed by the sisters' understanding of the needs of migrant pupils as well as the requirements of the civic

authorities. Cabrini asked Mother Domenica to collect information on the programmes offered by the other schools for girls, to assist in planning the offer in July 1892.¹¹² In a 1914 report to the Italian Vice-consul the Superior Josephine Lombardi summed up the aim of the MSC schools in New Orleans:

our particular concern is to impart the teaching of the English language according to the programme approved for the schools of this city to make our pupils capable of taking up the career for which they demonstrate an aptitude. In addition to this our dear duty is to teach them the beautiful language of our homeland (*patria*).¹¹³

The city programme was described in a letter of 1918 as ‘a complete elementary instruction up to the eighth grade’.¹¹⁴ There were many opportunities to ‘furnish the mind with cognitive and ornamental competences’. The sources indicate that there was a broad curriculum in addition to reading, writing and arithmetic. As in Rome, needlecraft and performing arts were important. Gymnastics was taught as well as American and Italian history and geography.

There was a major difference between New Orleans and Rome. The schools were bilingual, as were all MSC school in the United States. Cabrini regarded the teaching of English as the priority, as pupils would need it for work. The city’s approved programme was taught entirely in English.¹¹⁵ Teaching Italian proved challenging and demanded specialised educational practice. As the children spoke a dialect of Italian, they did not ‘bring to the classroom even that minimum domestic vocabulary which our children

¹¹² *Epistolario* 2, August 01, 1892, 177.

¹¹³ Josephine Lombardi, ‘To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini’ 28th August 1914, Reports, CR.

¹¹⁴ ‘Letter from New Orleans Orphanage to Commissioner of Emigration’, 20 Feb 1918, Reports CR.

¹¹⁵ ‘To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini’, 4th January 1915. Reports, CR.

acquire at their mother's knee.'¹¹⁶ In this respect the school was in fact 'tri-lingual'.

The younger pupils were introduced to Italian with practical oral input:

To the little ones, in addition to the appropriate programme for their class we give simple and practical lessons in the beautiful idiom in order to facilitate study as soon as they are capable.¹¹⁷

The oral work included learning poems and songs. From the age of eight, two lessons each week were devoted to Italian. Pupils were enabled to read and write correctly and to read with understanding. Methods included translation exercises.¹¹⁸ In 1913 Josephine Lombardi referred to two Italian textbooks in use: *Il Mio Libro* by Mestica-Galamini and *Grammatica della Lingua Italiana* by Adalgisa Costa.¹¹⁹ As there were so many subjects to cover, some were integrated. Mother Josephine explained that 'history of the homeland, physical and natural science are used by the teachers in oral lessons'.¹²⁰ With regard to the Italian language programme, in 1914 Mother Josephine noted that pupils followed the courses 'whether they are male or female'.¹²¹ This may indicate that written Italian was not always taught to migrant girls.

As in Rome, needlecraft was important for girls. It was the boarders of the orphanage, however, who had a wider range. The report of 1913 refers to

¹¹⁶ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910, Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 260-61.

¹¹⁷ 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini' 28th August 1914', Josephine Lombardi. Reports, CR.

¹¹⁸ 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini', 4th January 1915. Reports, CR.

¹¹⁹ 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini, 28th August 1914', Josephine Lombardi. Reports, CR.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

‘sewing, cutting, embroidery, crocheting, ironing’.¹²² In 1918 it included ‘white and coloured embroidery, lace making etc.’¹²³ Reports to the Consul refer to these subjects as ‘desirable for the young women to be successfully prepared to discharge the duties of good mothers which they will need later on.’¹²⁴

In New Orleans gymnastics was part of the curriculum. There is no mention of the subject in Rome. In New Orleans, like Rome there were many *academie*. The first was in the summer of 1893. Gymnastics was on the programme. The approach of the sisters was pupil-centred and the subject may well have been introduced to meet the needs of the boys in New Orleans who were referred to as ‘undisciplined’.¹²⁵ The *Academia* held on 4th July that year commenced with boys’ gymnastics and ‘the little ones performed gymnastics appropriate for their age.’ The girls benefitted. The Thanksgiving *Academia* in November 1893 also included girls’ gymnastics.

These school performances also gave opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their accomplishments in both English and Italian. They usually took place in the courtyard, with a stage erected for the occasion. During the first term of the school, Mother Diomira Pagliani prepared the children to sing Italian songs for a recital to celebrate Christmas 1892. It was a challenge and the secretary recorded that ‘as the girls do not speak

¹²² ‘To Inspector of Commission for Emigration New York’, 28 August 1913, from Mother Carolina, Reports, CR.

¹²³ ‘Letter from New Orleans Orphanage to Commissioner of Emigration’, 20 Feb 1918, Reports, CR.

¹²⁴ ‘Italian Consul of New Orleans’, 2nd April 1916, Reports, CR.

¹²⁵ M1, 71.

Italian well it proved a small trial' for Mother Diomira.¹²⁶ A volunteer helped, providing a role model. The Annals record that 'a good lady kindly came to sing for the children who were preparing for the *academia* and they saw her every week from that time'.¹²⁷ By the following year standards had risen. On 21st June 1894 the pupils distinguished themselves with 'a performance of a varied programme which pleased everybody'.¹²⁸ It was held after mass in the chapel and performed to a full courtyard. The programme included singing and instrumental music. The Annals record the highlights as:

an operetta in English for the *Birth Day of Grammar*, which succeeded beautifully. Another, *Bettina in Città*, (Bettina in the City) was given by our boarders (*bambine interne*) dressed in uniform. *Giovanna D'Arco* (Joan of Arc) was sung by a young girl and the story of two mothers recited well by another two. There was also a beautiful dialogue about the illustrious men of Italy all dressed in costumes that made a splendid sight. The sound lifted everyone so much as it was just beautiful.¹²⁹

The boys were still not enthusiastic about participating. The secretary noted in June 1894 that 'even the boys made their appearance but it was last and the shortest.'¹³⁰

In New Orleans, as in Rome, *academie* were held in honour of foreign visitors. Alex Orban, Cardinal Satolli's secretary, described the academia held in the convent parlour on 18th February 1896. Some pupils 'played a lovely little selection from Mascagni', one read an address in Italian and another recited a piece learnt by heart. Over the years the tradition of recitals in Italian as part of *academie* became well established and the

¹²⁶ M1,19.

¹²⁷ M1, 73.

¹²⁸ M1, 98.

¹²⁹ M1,98.

¹³⁰ M1,98.

sisters skilled in preparing younger pupils. In 1896 Orban noted that the child had said, 'my heart is thumping', nevertheless 'she recited her piece without pause'.¹³¹ By 1917 the report to Consul Cav. G Gentili noted that:

the ease with which little boys and girls remember Italian poetry and songs is surprising as is their clear pronunciation when they repeat the beautiful verses learnt off by heart. At a recent school festival it was a real pleasure for everyone in the large distinguished audience.¹³²

Mark Choate has explored the issue of 'bilingualism as a battleground for Informal Empire' showing the centrality of schools:

Patriotic rituals including the Pledge of Allegiance reforged American public schools as assimilationist melting pots. By contrast Italian schools abroad flew Italian flags and celebrated Italian holidays to promote a civic religion for emigrants, bringing national themes onto a transnational stage.¹³³

Neither of these approaches was adopted by Cabrini who preferred a more child-centred one. She recognised that cultural heritage contributed to the dignity of the person and wrote of the need 'to train them so they will not be ashamed to be Italians'.¹³⁴ In organising celebrations and outings for the children the sisters also established traditions which were American. In 1892 the two days to celebrate the discovery of America by the Italian Columbus provided the first opportunity. On 12th October the children were taken to a thanksgiving mass at the Italian Church.¹³⁵ After lunch sisters and pupils walked around the city to see the celebrations. There were also annual celebrations for 4th July and Thanksgiving. The Annals for Christmas Eve 1892 recorded that Mother Domenica 'prepared

¹³¹ Alexis Orban, 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 516-7.

¹³² To Consul Cav. G Gentili in Response to a request of 13 February 1917, Reports to the Italian Consulate 1906-1918, CR .

¹³³ Choate, *Emigrant Nation?*, 116.

¹³⁴ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910, 261.

¹³⁵ M1, 12.

a magnificent Christmas tree as is the custom here'.¹³⁶ The occasions contributed to making school enjoyable and the American terms are used for treats including 'cake' and 'candy'. There were many annual parades and celebrations held by Italians abroad on 20th September.¹³⁷ As in Italy, the sisters did not participate.

Cabrini had developed her understanding of the relationship between Catholic and national identity as a young teacher and foundress in the newly united Italy.¹³⁸ This took on an additional dimension in relation to migrants in the United States. Cabrini was aware that Italian immigrants were regarded as 'a dangerous element'.¹³⁹ The Italian Commission for Emigration was as concerned to address 'Italian vices' abroad, as the government was at home. Reports from the sisters refer to honouring the name of Italy. Cabrini was clear that the pupils would honour Italy by becoming good citizens of their adopted land and that religious input was central to this:

as well as instructing their minds educate their hearts and instil in them principles of religion and honesty in such a way that they will grow as good Christians and good citizens.¹⁴⁰

Mother Josephine Lombardi became known for teaching religion in a way that would 'form heart in love of religion and practice of virtue' rather than as just another academic subject:

During exams for religion which she supervised she presented the questions in such a way as to make sure that the material learnt by the

¹³⁶ M1, 22.

¹³⁷ These were to celebrate the taking of Rome in 1870.

¹³⁸ Williams, 'Mobilising Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice', 635-9.

¹³⁹ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910.

¹⁴⁰ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 547.

pupils did not remain in the realm of pure theory but rather became real in the practice of a heartfelt Christian life.¹⁴¹

Dealing with an incident of theft as an inexperienced teacher in May 1893, however, proved quite a challenge for her. At the end of school on 16th May a clock was stolen from the desk in the room where she taught the older girls. On the same day a half dollar went missing from Mother Diormira's class. The following day the pupils all professed their innocence. The call to virtue failed. The sisters then reluctantly used the threat of hell having concluded that only an 'upright conscience' would lead to the recovery of the items:

We tried to make it sink into the children that the culprit was selling paradise for so little, and without returning the items the girls who had stolen them could never more be saved.¹⁴²

They were not concerned to punish the perpetrators and the secretary noted that 'We encouraged them to return the stolen goods and put them back in their place without us even knowing who had done it'.¹⁴³ Whilst the half dollar was found on Mother Diormira's desk in the afternoon, the threat of losing paradise did not bring back the clock. As a result Mother Josephine and Mother Battistina visited the homes of the girls they suspected and told the mothers that the return of the clock was their responsibility. One of the mothers came to school with the clock the following morning and the daughter 'did not dare appear' in school for a few days. The Annals, however, convey a concern at the public humiliation of the pupil in keeping with the advice in the Rule referred to in the Rome study, not to 'speak in community of the defects of the girls and bury with

¹⁴¹ MSC, *Settantacinque Anni di Vita, 1880-1955*. (Rome: MSC), 89.

¹⁴² M1, 49-50.

¹⁴³ M1, 49-50.

jealous secrecy what might accidentally be learnt of others' conscience.'¹⁴⁴

The secretary commented sympathetically that 'it is to be hoped that this lesson, although a little bitter, will be to her advantage in the future'.¹⁴⁵

Over the years the sisters gained experience in character education. As the roll rose the numbers made teaching in a way that 'formed the heart' more challenging, as a sister noted in relation to the Cathedral School:

In this second year of the new school, 700 little boys and girls kept 12 of our sisters busy as they sought to form the hearts of these little youngsters.¹⁴⁶

By 1918 they were confident that character formation was a strength of their educational practice:

We flatter ourselves, then, that we form their characters and return them equipped with a good standard of education which will enable them to earn their daily bread honourably and possibly be of assistance to their unfaithful parents.¹⁴⁷

Pedagogy

Jay Dolan described Catholic teaching sisters as usually having no more than elementary education themselves and pointed out that few had teaching certificates prior to 1920.¹⁴⁸ In contrast, the majority of the Italian teaching sisters who served in New Orleans during the start-up were well educated and some, like Cabrini, had gained their teaching certificates in Italy.¹⁴⁹ Other well-educated sisters from Lombardy who came to serve in New Orleans during this period included Mother

¹⁴⁴ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 29.

¹⁴⁵ M1, 50.

¹⁴⁶ M 4, 11.

¹⁴⁷ Letter from New Orleans Orphanage to Commissioner of Emigration, 20 Feb 1918, Reports, CR.

¹⁴⁸ Jay P Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 288.

¹⁴⁹ Maria Susanna Garroni has shown, in her work on the Pallottini sisters, this was not typical of the Italian sisters who went to the United States. Garroni, 'Genere e transnazionalismo', in *Sorelle d'oltreoceano*, ed. Garroni, 111–145.

Bernardina Vallisneri (1855-1912) Mother Ignazia Dossena (1866-1944), Mother Luigina Albertini (1866-1943) and Mother Carolina Bertoli (1871-1942). Bernardina who was superior of New Orleans from 1895-1899 had a degree.¹⁵⁰ Ignazia was in New Orleans by 1897. She is described as well-educated and her brother was a Carmelite priest.¹⁵¹ Luigina who arrived in 1899 was a nursery teacher.¹⁵² Carolina, superior and headmistress from 1900-1903, also had her *patente*.¹⁵³ She is credited with establishing the MSC school structure in America. Whilst there is no reference to the American teachers who came to New Orleans having certificates, some are described as able teachers. Irish Mother Charles Maguire (1868-1929), who arrived in 1899, is referred to as 'model teacher'.¹⁵⁴ She is recorded as teaching 'the big boys'.¹⁵⁵ The importance attached to pedagogical and subject expertise is evident in the employment of skilled American lay teachers to teach English and take the boys' classes. The sisters' recognised their lack of experience with older boys. Father Paroli, the new Italian chaplain, also helped with them. Miss Egan's replacement was not able to deal with the boys in April 1893. She was dismissed quickly. Mother Domenica took on the class as well as continuing with her work as superior and headmistress. She quickly moved them to a classroom on the ground floor, opening onto the courtyard, which may have allowed them more recreation than the girls.

¹⁵⁰ *Epistolario 1*, February 12, 1888; *Epistolario 5*, 663-4.

¹⁵¹ *Epistolario 5*, 668.

¹⁵² *Epistolario 5*, 734.

¹⁵³ *Epistolario 5*, 729.

¹⁵⁴ *Epistolario 5*, 714-5.

¹⁵⁵ M1,141.

The aim for schools in the original MSC Rule stated that ‘the teaching will be adjusted to meet the needs of those being taught’.¹⁵⁶ This pupil-centred approach, evident in teaching the boys, is also found in the induction of orphans. The sisters aimed to provide children, who had experienced trauma, with an ‘asylum of peace’.¹⁵⁷ On arrival many, ‘being in such a tender state’, were not ready to follow a full timetable. Initially they attended only courses in English and Italian. The 1907 report noted that when they commenced specialist vocational courses teaching was ‘adjusted to their capacity and condition’.¹⁵⁸

The loving care, integral to this pupil-centred educational practice in both the schools and the orphanage, was reflected in the language of the reports to the Consul. For example, in 1907 the directress wrote that ‘here with love and affection we aim to give them an education adapted to their condition’.¹⁵⁹ This loving care was not just for the traumatised orphans but part of other classroom practice. In 1918, for example, the superior wrote of ‘an Italian language course taught with love and learnt with ease and pleasure’.¹⁶⁰ The writers of the Annals referred to the orphans and pupils as, ‘our children’ or ‘our dear children’. Former pupil, Bishop Charles Greco remembered the motherly approach of the sisters writing ‘Mother Philomena loved me like a son’.¹⁶¹ When he met Mother Cabrini, ‘she put her hand on my head as in a blessing and passed it over my face caressingly, like a mother would bless and caress her child in warm

¹⁵⁶ ‘Regole dell’Istituto’.

¹⁵⁷ ‘To L Scelsi, Italian consul in New Orleans 26 June 1907 for the year 1906’, Reports, CR.

¹⁵⁸ To L Scelsi, Italian consul in New Orleans 26 June 1907 for the year 1906, Reports, CR.

¹⁵⁹ To the Italian Consul in New Orleans, 1 Jan 1907, Reports, CR.

¹⁶⁰ Letter from New Orleans Orphanage to Commissioner of Emigration, 20 Feb 1918, Reports, CR.

¹⁶¹ Greco, *With God’s Help*, 4.

affection.¹⁶² Grecco also referred to the lay teacher as having a similar approach. He referred to her as 'Miss Maggie, whom we all loved dearly.'¹⁶³ Other pupils seem to have enjoyed school too. At the end of the first year the pupils 'showed a reluctance to leave the school' for the holiday.¹⁶⁴ In the autumn of 1893 there were no classes as the city had a Columbus festival on 21st October. The pupils nevertheless arrived at Philip Street to join the activities arranged for the orphans. These included a raffle for which Father Gambera provided prizes.¹⁶⁵ The words 'happy' and 'joyous' often feature in the Annals.

From the outset, the sisters wanted to create a family atmosphere in the orphanage. On the arrival of the first little orphan on 14th September 1892 the secretary noted that 'perhaps she will be a tiny mustard seed which with time will grow into a large family.'¹⁶⁶ The pupils' families became part of the wider school family. The 1894 end of year academia was intended for pupils but they arrived with their families.¹⁶⁷ In 1896 Orban described the celebration for Satolli's visit as 'this family reunion'.¹⁶⁸

Cabrini's concern with impressions gained in childhood is evident in her letter to Leo XIII discussed in relation to Rome. Similarly, in 1910 she wrote to the Commissioner for Emigration regarding the influence of the educational environment on the pupil. She referred to it as 'a universal

¹⁶² Ibid., 3.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 2.

¹⁶⁴ M1, 70-71.

¹⁶⁵ M1, 17.

¹⁶⁶ M1, 12. This is a biblical reference to growth of the Kingdom of God, Matthew (13:31-32), Mark (4:30-32), and Luke (13:18-19).

¹⁶⁷ M1, 62.

¹⁶⁸ Orban, 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 516.

and sovereign law which admits only few exceptions'.¹⁶⁹ She referred to a 'recent pamphlet' by Bishop Bonnelli to support this claim. The familial approach used by the sisters in language teaching, however, was about more than atmosphere pedagogy. Rather, it was informed by their understanding of initial language acquisition and the need for language 'lessons to be learnt as they would be in the easy way of the family'.¹⁷⁰ This rationale for only using oral work with younger pupils was developed through reflection on experience. In 1910 Cabrini explained that for younger pupils 'experience has shown that a mixture of **two** languages, as far as the writing of the language is concerned, is detrimental to the progress of both languages'.¹⁷¹ The co-founders and sisters who came during the early years brought experience of bilingual education from their work in the schools for migrants in New York.

Assessment

The sources for New Orleans give less information on examinations than those of Rome with details only for the summer of 1893 and a brief mention in 1894. In Rome external examiners visited for end of year assessments and the pupils also sat public examinations in the secular schools. When Mother Domenica raised the matter with the Archbishop in 1893 he advised her that the Archdiocese had no provision for this and she should oversee them. As a result they were conducted in-house which was noted as a 'great benefit in the first year'. Nevertheless they took a good deal of preparation. The sisters went to bed at 1.00am on 26th June 1893, the night before the four days of examinations started. There were

¹⁶⁹ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910.

¹⁷⁰ 'To Vice Consul Cav. G Papini', 4th January 1915, Reports, CR.

¹⁷¹ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910. The emphasis is in the original.

both written and oral examinations. Arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, geography and United States history were conducted in English. Mother Domenica supervised the Italian examination herself.¹⁷² The achievement of the youngest pupils indicates the impact of the sisters' skill in early years' provision: 'all had their page written; many filled the booklet, although they were all under the age of seven.'¹⁷³

An annual prize giving and *academia* took place after the examinations, as it did in the Rome schools. The chaplain, Father Paroli, provided three medals and books for prizes. The children who were awarded books, however, disappointed the sisters by making clear that they would have preferred medals:

They all had their eyes on the medals and were not happy to be awarded the other prizes which were beautiful books.¹⁷⁴

Those who did not receive a prize or a testimony were disappointed and began to cry.¹⁷⁵ The reaction of the sisters indicates their wish to encourage the pupils and see them happy. They prepared testimonies for the rest of the older pupils and pictures for the little ones to hand out the following day. The following year they distributed prizes with 'some on merit and some for encouragement so that all were happy'.¹⁷⁶ They ensured that in subsequent years they obtained donations of medals for all prizes. Their benefactors gave 22 in 1898.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² M1, 60-1.

¹⁷³ M1, 61.

¹⁷⁴ M1, 62.

¹⁷⁵ M1, 62.

¹⁷⁶ M1, 99.

¹⁷⁷ M1, 126.

The reports to the Consul on attainment in the orphanage and the schools give no details on academic standards. They use short phrases such as 'best results' in 1907 and 'good results and general satisfaction' in 1915. The only subjects mentioned are English and Italian. For example in 1909: 'Their profiting from their studies in English and Italian is most encouraging' and in 1917 'It is good to see how they apply themselves to their exercises in Italian and how well they can translate them into English'. It is evident from the reports spanning 12 years that the term school attainment (*'l'andamento della scuola'*) refers to numbers on roll and rates of attendance.

The sources make no reference to formal inspections by the Church or American authorities although in 1910 Cabrini wrote of 'the government, which closely guards and supervises institutions of charity which it subsidizes'.¹⁷⁸ In her 1910 letter to Leone Reynaudi, the Commissioner for Emigration, she gave a detailed response to an inspection of the New Orleans school and orphanage by the Commission. It is clear from the text that the visitor was critical of the sisters' approach to teaching Italian and developing the pupils' Italian identity (*italianità*). Cabrini addressed pedagogical issues confidently, referring to 'my experience of 21 years'.¹⁷⁹ With regard to the language teaching, she pointed out that the visitor was using standards applicable to schools for the children of Italian diplomats: 'small private schools enrolling fifteen to twenty pupils who are the children of professionals who eventually will return to Italy.'¹⁸⁰ The same standards of assessment were not appropriate for the MSC schools:

¹⁷⁸ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

the superficial evaluation made by an inexperienced observer or at least by someone who is not up-to-date with regard to charitable institutions existing abroad.¹⁸¹

She pointed out the constraints on teaching Italian:

we are dealing with teaching, in a very limited time span, that is, a few hours of school in which one is obliged to cover a vast curriculum mandated by the government, a language which even among us requires many hours of study and a great deal of effort on the part of the teachers.¹⁸²

The visitor may well have had no understanding of the pedagogy appropriate to meeting the needs of the pupils. He may also have been informed by the masonic, anti-clerical lobby. In her response, Cabrini specifically pointed out that developing Italian identity in the children of migrants required more than rhetoric:

It is easy to acclaim one's native land at banquets, in parades and with flag waving, but it is difficult to keep alive in a hostile environment a love for Italy in the hearts of youth.¹⁸³

As evidence of provision of the truly Italian environment required for 'rearing, in a foreign land, girls with a genuine Italian spirit', she pointed to the Italian staff 'who have Italian customs, who habitually speak Italian, and require it to be spoken by the orphans'.¹⁸⁴ Teachers needed to be fully committed. Her teachers had 'left their native land only a few years ago for the sake of their compatriots' and were 'not only Italian by birth but also in heart and spirit'.¹⁸⁵ She argued that this could not be assessed by a stranger but only by someone who knew them well. The situation

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

provides another example of how she engaged in dialogue with secular authorities with views opposing her own.

In 1896 Orban saw the potential of the immigrant pupils predicting that they would 'become men who will make their mark and be counted among the best elements of the American population'.¹⁸⁶ The sister who wrote *Memorie 2* noted that 'many of the early pupils have achieved good positions and retain a great love for the mission'.¹⁸⁷ Two became well-known. Joseph LaNasa, who became a doctor, attended the Philip Street School, leaving in 1912. He returned in 1929 to volunteer his services at the day nursery when it opened on the same site.¹⁸⁸ Charles Greco was taught by the sisters at St Mary's, progressed to secondary education in the seminary and went on to become 'the first native born Mississippian to become a Catholic Bishop, indeed one of the very first Italian-Americans from the South to achieve national attention'.¹⁸⁹ He served as Bishop of Alexandria, Louisiana between 1946 and 1973 and was a Church Father at all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

The sisters were self-critical and were aware that the standards achieved by their pupils were not as high as those in other established Catholic schools in New Orleans. In July 1893 two sisters were invited to the prize giving at the school of the Sisters of Mary,

¹⁸⁶ Alexis Orban, 'Cardinal Satolli's Visit to New Orleans', 517.

¹⁸⁷ M2, 14.

¹⁸⁸ MSC, 1892-1942 *Foundation of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart in the South of the United States*, CR.

¹⁸⁹ Nicholas J. Falco, Review of *With God's Help*, http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/modlang/carasi/via/ViaVol4_1Reviews.htm (accessed 01/09/2018).

which they described as ‘really stupendous’.¹⁹⁰ They were not discouraged in 1899, when the pupils performed a short play in a competition organised by the Archbishop, but failed to win a prize. They hoped in time to raise standards. The record in the Annals ended with the word, ‘patience’ as it did later in the year when they realised that their exhibition of work at the Winter School did not compare favourably with ‘so many very beautiful, magnificent works.’¹⁹¹

Perhaps the most significant mark of the success of the MSC was recorded by the author of *Memorie 2* who wrote that former pupils, ‘many of whom are now mothers, do us the honour of sending their children to the school they once attended themselves’.¹⁹²

6. 3 Implementing Mother Cabrini’s Educational Practice in the Community

In New Orleans the sisters organised participative devotional activities and Religious Instruction programmes for the wider community, as they did in Rome. A distinctive feature was the considerable outreach work with informal education in health and citizenship. In terms of parish education New Orleans was very significant. It was there that they first took on responsibility for a parish. The sisters also established mission stations in the surrounding countryside, although that work lies outside the remit of this study.

¹⁹⁰ M1, 62.

¹⁹¹ M1, 131; 135.

¹⁹² M2, 14.

The sisters enlivened the Italian Mission from their arrival, establishing sodalities and organising celebrations. As accommodation at the mission was limited, these activities took place in Philip Street. The activities of the sodalities were a mix of explaining the faith, the devotional, opportunities to develop ornamental competences and have fun. In December 1892 the oratory group made decorations for the Mission chapel. The Annals described it as 'very lively' and 'many women and young girls came to help with the sewing.'¹⁹³ The afternoon ended with a service in the chapel and a talk by the chaplain on Saint Lucy as it was the eve of her feast. The Daughters of Mary was set up on the 8th December 1892, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. 30 girls came to sign up. The numbers were much higher than expected. The special admission service and decoration with the sodality medal was therefore postponed.¹⁹⁴ When a former member, Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi, was interviewed in 1974 she recalled her Sundays at Philip Street 'as some of the happiest days of my life':

There was a group of us girls who would go to mass there, go home for dinner and come back and play in the yard all afternoon, jumping rope, singing around a piano.¹⁹⁵

Older women could join the Society of Christian Women under the protection of Our Lady of the Rosary. They also had a special admission service. In the afternoon of Sunday 18th March 1893 the 17 who joined sat on benches with red decorations, were decorated with medals, listened to a discourse and sang the *Magnificat*.

¹⁹³ M1, 22.

¹⁹⁴ M1, 21.

¹⁹⁵ Florence L Herman, 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi'.

The masonic groups and other supporters of Liberal Italy brought the newly invented traditions, such as the 20th September celebrations, to the Italians in the New World. The sisters, however, established colourful Italian-American Catholic traditions for them. On the first Christmas day the ornamental competences of the sisters were evident.¹⁹⁶ They stayed up late at night preparing. Mother Josephine painted scenery for the recital. The secretary noted that if Raphael had come he could not have painted as quickly as Mother Josephine. Mother Alacoque made a crib for the chapel, which was taken down to the courtyard for the recital. As well as decorating the American Christmas tree, Mother Domenica built a stage. When the families arrived they saw the courtyard transformed:

A large canvas covered the courtyard the underside of which was covered with muslin in many different colours. At the back on the stage was a beautiful crib surrounded with trees and it all made a magnificent sight.¹⁹⁷

At 3.00 pm the courtyard was full. Many did not attend benediction in the chapel at 4.00, but they all watched the recital which followed. In 1893 Christmas Day Mass was celebrated in Philip Street. At the end there was a magnificent procession through the garden with the priest carrying the Child Jesus from the altar. The Annals noted that 'it brought to mind the festivals of the first Christians in the catacombs'.¹⁹⁸ In March the feast of Saint Joseph was celebrated. In May mothers and children brought flowers in honour of Mary, the mother of Christ.

Father Paroli was struggling to manage the Italian mission. By July 1893 he decided to hand it over to the sisters. With the support of the Archbishop,

¹⁹⁶ M1, 22-4.

¹⁹⁷ M1, 24.

¹⁹⁸ M1, 78.

the mission was moved to the MSC house in Philip Street and the sisters administered the parish. They were aware that this was not the norm. The writer of the 1914 *Memorie* produced for the Silver Jubilee of the missions, probably Mother Josephine Lombardi, noted that 'this was the beginning of a special era because as well as the school and the mission we now had responsibility for the small Italian parish'.¹⁹⁹ In *The American Catholic Experience*, Jay Dolan makes the point that in immigrant neighbourhoods the Catholic parish church was transformed from a 'Mass house' into a community institution.²⁰⁰ This is exactly how Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi described Philip Street: 'In those days the chapel was the gathering place for the Italians and we all congregated there for mass on Sundays'.²⁰¹ Cabrini described parishioners 'reunited in the courtyard of the house after Mass, as they once did in the square of their own village church, entertaining their compatriots'.²⁰²

Some parishioners attended daily mass in the sisters' chapel. One, Mrs Maestri, was 'a well-to-do lady'.²⁰³ She enabled Charles Greco, who served at mass, to progress to the seminary. He could only take up a place with financial help. His family were poor and did not know the richer Italians. Giabaccia has argued that Italy's many diaspora's reproduced the social class divisions of the homeland, as well as the regional ones.²⁰⁴ In another example of 'crossing diasporas', the sisters sought the assistance of Mrs Maestri. Greco referred to her as his 'fairy godmother'.²⁰⁵ Her son,

¹⁹⁹ M3,3.

²⁰⁰ Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism*, 204-5.

²⁰¹ Florence L Herman, 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi'.

²⁰² 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910.

²⁰³ Greco, *With God's Help*, 6.

²⁰⁴ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*.

²⁰⁵ Greco, *With God's Help* 6.

who later became mayor of New Orleans, helped him when he became a pastor.

The sisters educated children and adults to understand the sacraments, as they did in Rome. From 1893 the sisters prepared children to receive their first Holy Communion, organising retreats in the days beforehand. 16 girls and 12 boys attended the first from the 18th to the 19th June 1893.²⁰⁶ The following year there were 25 and the retreat took place over three days. The Archbishop gave permission for Mother Domenica to preside over the retreat herself. The chaplain heard confessions and celebrated Mass. The rest of the preparation consisted of 'alternating prayer, instruction and the study of doctrine'.²⁰⁷ By 1907 the sisters were preparing 500 first communicants across the three schools.²⁰⁸ In 1910 Pius X lowered the age for receiving First Holy Communion, which was normally between 10 and 14 years, to seven.²⁰⁹ The sisters in New Orleans immediately implemented the change. Father Ciolino remembered that 'the effects could be seen immediately in the children who became gentler and more religious'.²¹⁰ During community visits, like those in Rome, the sisters explained the Catholic faith. They brought many adults back to the sacraments and arranged for marriages to be regularised. In his letter of condolence in 1918 Father Paroli noted that, following Cabrini's example and instruction, the sisters in New Orleans had been able to achieve what 'the priests had never been able to do'.²¹¹ Father Ciolino observed that they achieved this with 'words, exhortations and every means'. The means

²⁰⁶ M1, 57.

²⁰⁷ M1, 91.

²⁰⁸ 'Relazione, 1907', AG.

²⁰⁹ *QUAM SINGULARI*, the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Discipline of the Sacraments on First Communion, August 8, 1910, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Pius10/p10quam.htm> (accessed 31/05/2015).

²¹⁰ MC, 22.

²¹¹ MSC, *In Memoria*, 233.

included the practical solution of arranging an evening mass for those who had to work on Sundays.²¹²

Through the process of accompaniment the sisters provided informal citizenship and health education as family members might have done in Italy. In writing to the students of the Magistero in Rome Cabrini explained that the adults called the missionaries 'mothers' and 'sisters', and that 'these words are not without meaning, for they know that with such titles hearts truly maternal correspond'. Taking Our Lady of Grace as their model they interceded for migrants in need. In addition to obtaining resources for the schools, orphanages and parishes, they also obtained justice for victims of crime. Cabrini referred to:

the sisters, who often have been fortunate enough to succeed in their pleas at the tribunals of justice, so that justice was rendered to some of our co-nationals who were victims of deceit or oppression.²¹³

The sisters do not refer to the criminal element who might handle matters differently. They would certainly have been mindful of it. Whilst De Maria confirms the findings of scholarly research regarding the myth of the mafia in New Orleans in this period, she nevertheless makes the point that some Italians turned to violent crime to settle personal vendettas.²¹⁴

The sisters brought spiritual comfort to those in hospital by reminding them of the love of Christ and of Mary. A sister recalled pinning a miraculous medal with her image on a dying man in hospital telling him: 'She is mother of God and our mother and oh how she loves us.'²¹⁵

²¹² M2, 24.

²¹³ 'To the Commissioner General of Emigration', May 13, 1910.

²¹⁴ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 144.

²¹⁵ M2, 18.

In New Orleans the sisters were also concerned for the material needs of families as they were in Rome. During the 1905 yellow fever epidemic the sisters were able to assist the Italians in overcoming their superstitions about the disease.²¹⁶ Elenor McMain, a leading social reformer in New Orleans at the time, recognised the sisters' role in a 1905 article for *Charities and Commons*.²¹⁷ McMain was the founder and head of Kingsley House Settlement and President of the Woman's League. She visited the area around Philip Street, 'four blocks which then had tallied 77, 39, 50 and 53 cases, or one-twelfth of the entire number of cases for the city'.²¹⁸ She noted the Italian immigrants' suspicion of strangers and their trust in the sisters who had been 'tireless in their gentle ministrations to the sick and unfortunate ones, coming from family to family with both spiritual and material comfort'.²¹⁹ The sisters were able to persuade victims that the medical professionals could help. As a result they allowed them to visit.²²⁰ A vehicle from the Public Health Department made a daily stop at the Philip Street house. There the officials would find out from the sisters which houses to visit.²²¹ They left disinfectant and medical supplies for the sisters to take to the families.

6.4 Implementing Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice in the Education and Formation of Sisters

Education and formation of sisters in New Orleans supported their acquisition of subject teaching skills as well their abilities to teach in a way

²¹⁶ The 1905 epidemic in New Orleans was the last in the US as five years earlier mosquitos had been identified as the cause.

²¹⁷ McMain, 'Behind the Yellow Fever in Little Palermo'.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 159.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 156.

²²⁰ M2, 7.

²²¹ M4, 7.

appropriate to a Missionary of the Sacred Heart. After Domenica arrived in New Orleans with the advance party, Cabrini's first advice was practical. As New Orleans had a significant French speaking population, she was to find a young lady to help her to 'refresh' her French.²²² She also gave practical advice on teaching bi-lingual pupils. In 1893 she wrote that whether the teaching was in Italian or English depended on the needs of the local children. She suggested that 'lessons and songs should be in English. Poetry or some dialogue in History can be in Italian'.²²³ Whilst the vocational curriculum in New Orleans initially focused on traditional domestic skills Cabrini also saw the need for secretarial skills and in 1893 wrote to Domenica advising her to attend a training course in stenography (shorthand typing) with Mother Josephine. Using a cascade model they could train other sisters who could then teach this new subject to pupils.²²⁴

Cabrini's approach to forming the sisters in the 'love of religion and practice of virtue' is also evident. The biographical notes on Mother Domenica record that she was considered 'the living Rule'.²²⁵ Domenica's recollections of the New Orleans start-up, however, describe her struggle to practice the virtue of charity, which was central to the MSC Rule:

It was a continuous discipline, those mosquitoes so annoying. There was very disgusting and filthy yellow coloured drinking water; a humid and stuffy atmosphere, to say nothing of the mugs of the brigands of Lower Italy.²²⁶

²²² *Epistolario* 2, July 20, 1892, 175 .

²²³ *Epistolario* 2, April 26, 1893.

²²⁴ *Epistolario* 2, May 30, 1893, 289.

²²⁵ *Epistolario* 5, 676.

²²⁶ *Scritti*, 5.

She explained that it was Cabrini who ‘made us love the mission of New Orleans’. Cabrini taught through accompaniment. Initially this meant taking Domenica out with her. She observed Cabrini’s friendly relationships with everyone she met. They treated Cabrini as if she was their friend. Domenica noted, ‘I believe that in her heart that is how it really was’.²²⁷ It had the effect of ‘making us capable to undertake the most difficult sacrifices with the greatest pleasure and ease’.²²⁸

In New Orleans, as elsewhere, Cabrini wanted the sisters to understand charity not as an obligation but rather as emerging from Divine friendship. This is particularly evident in letters to the sisters in New Orleans written during Lent. In March 1893 she compared the sacrifices made by the sisters in their practice of charity to those of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane and during his passion:

In these beautiful days of Jesus in the garden and in his passion you have seen how small our sacrifices and our pains are in comparison with those which He wanted to suffer for us.²²⁹

In Lent of 1895, she called on them to meditate on the passion of Christ as it explains the infinite love of God. This would prepare them to teach God’s love:

Make yourselves holy especially now that you meditate the most holy passion of Jesus where the infinity of the love of our most beloved spouse for us is explained, a little love for so much love. Also explain this love with zeal gathering all the Italians for Easter.²³⁰

Padre Ciolino noted the impact of this approach:

²²⁷ Scritti, 5.

²²⁸ Scritti, 6.

²²⁹ ‘To all sisters New Orleans’, *Epistolario 2*, March 29, 1893, 263.

²³⁰ *Epistolario 2*, March 30, 1895, 498.

The spirit of self-sacrifice and prayer resulted in charity towards their neighbour made them loved and respected by all who encountered them even only once.²³¹

Cabrini supported the superiors in establishing and maintaining a community in which MSC teachers might flourish by focusing on the loving care of the Rule.²³² She was frank in her letters as she was with Maddelena and Gesuina in Rome. In 1896 she wrote to Mother Bernardina:

I feel that you have some trouble with Mother Ignazia, not only should you have patience but also use all the means that charity suggests with her.²³³

Principal of the local Jesuit College, Father AH Otis SJ, referred to this approach in his discourse at a memorial for Cabrini in 1918. He explained that 'she looked upon each and every member of her order with the eyes and heart of a true mother'.²³⁴

Conclusion

The education of poor migrants in New Orleans between 1892 and 1917 clarifies Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice. Education for personal growth, as well as vocational preparation, was informed by a concern for the dignity of the migrant. In New Orleans the migrants were foreigners, with limited English and victims of intense prejudice. This context provides many opportunities to consider 'adjusting teaching according to those being taught', which Cabrini stated in the 1881 Rule.

²³¹ M2, 21.

²³² 'Regole dell'Istituto', 9.

²³³ Epistolario 2, Oct 28, 1896, .660.

²³⁴ MSC, *In Memoria*, 90.

It is evident that in New Orleans the curriculum required by the civil authorities was adapted to include Italian language and culture. It was broader than that of Rome. Cabrini understood that curriculum organisation needs to be flexible. This is seen in the integration of subjects in order to cover the curriculum in the time available. The teaching sisters in New Orleans were professionally qualified. It is clear, however, that they developed their bi-lingual educational practice by reflecting on their experience as practitioners, as Cabrini explained in her letter to Reynaudi, the Commissioner for Emigration. Another example of flexibility was the child-centred practice of adjusting the programme during the induction of orphans. Loving care is also evident in the use of the words 'happy', 'joyous' and 'encouragement' in relation to all pupils. The motherly approach and creation of a harmonious school family was more than pastoral care. It permeated the pedagogy. It is clear that the sisters were committed to a morality of happiness, with a focus on the call to virtue. Methods were adjusted, albeit reluctantly, as the incident of the stolen clock demonstrates. This incident, and the sisters' response to the distress of children who did not receive prizes, provide good examples of the focus on dignity. The reflective approach to pedagogical development was also used in the flexibility in meeting the needs of boy pupils with curricular adjustment to introduce gymnastics.

The sisters in New Orleans, like those in Rome, demonstrated confidence in their educational practice. This is evident in dealing with the authorities on the matter of bi-lingual education, as well as the pride in their character education. There is realism in their self-assessment, for example in relation to the challenge posed by large classes when trying to support formation of the heart of each pupil. Similarly they recognised that the

standards achieved by their pupils needed to be improved to compare with those of other schools.

Missionary education understood as re-evangelising the baptised is evident in the formal and informal community education. Accompaniment in dealing with the needs of epidemics and legal problems were important. The sisters, again like those in Rome, saw themselves as successors to the apostles. The account for the Silver Jubilee of the Missions in 1914 refers to them as follows:

Two by two the missionaries set out on the road as once did the first messengers of the good news.²³⁵

Cabrini's practical approach is also evident as she worked to provide modern accommodation. Like their counterparts in Rome, the sisters demonstrated adaptability, optimism and sacrifice as they worked to improve the material environment. They depended on other MSC communities and other religious congregations. Lay women, like those in Rome, provided good support. The funding from the Italian consulate was given grudgingly from 1906. They realised that the attempts of the Italian colony to provide non-Catholic education had failed. Whilst the Catholic authorities were more welcoming than in Rome, no funds were provided until 1911. This was only when the sisters took their pupils and worked for the diocese. Again, as in Rome, they adapted and moved. A sister wrote of how Archbishop Blenk established a new Italian mission with a large church and the parishioners from Philip Street moved:

Then the Missionaries cede the territory and redirect their steps elsewhere and cultivate and fertilize other vineyards.²³⁶

²³⁵ M4, 7.

²³⁶ M3, 5.

Chapter 7: London Case Study, 1902-1917

Introduction

The first MSC house in London was founded in 1902. In contrast to Rome and New Orleans, Cabrini established only fee-paying schools in London. These were to provide for the daughters of the emerging Catholic middle class, in the expanding London suburbs. A significant factor in the provision was the impact of the early twentieth century transnational context of the MSC. By 1902 the Institute had established 15 schools and orphanages in the United States and more were in the pipeline. From 1889 Cabrini had recruited American women to the MSC but not in sufficient numbers to meet the demand for schools. As a result, she had to pay the wages of lay teachers, as she did in New Orleans. England and Ireland offered possibilities for recruitment. She wanted 'a foothold in England' in case anti-clericalism forced sisters to leave France, Spain or Italy.¹ She also saw a missionary opportunity, wishing to contribute to the re-evangelisation of England. By 1917 the sisters had established two fee-paying schools in London. One was an elite international school. There was also a nursery and a residence for ladies. The sisters also contributed to the establishment of new parishes, as they did in Rome and New Orleans.

There are two sets of memories of sisters which cover the period 1902-9 in London. One is the recollections of an individual anonymous sister.² The other was written in 1918 and signed by four sisters, Mother Domenica Bianchi, Mother Maria di Gesù (Ajani), Mother Tommasina Didoni and

¹ *Epistolario* 4, July 11, 1902,39; August 16,1902, 53.

² 'Memorie Londra, sulla fondazione in Londra', Memorie, AG. (ML).

Mother Fede Mandelli.³ These would have been written in response to the request from the Motherhouse in Rome, that all sisters write their memories following Cabrini's death in 1917. A well-kept book of house annals for 1910–1934 was started by Mother Xavier De Maria and continued by Mother Maria Ajani.⁴ A hand-written history was written by Mother Patrick Finn probably in 1972 before she left to live in Rome.⁵ She was a pupil in the 1920s, a sister and for many years headmistress of the school. The memories of Father Logan, who attended the school in the 1930s and an interview which I conducted with Sister Julia De Ath, a pupil from 1940, who became a sister, have been helpful in identifying sisters and property details, referred to in the earlier sources.⁶ The script of a performance by pupils in 1910, the school prospectus of 1910 and a 1914 booklet on London, produced to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of the Missions, provide details on curriculum and pedagogy.⁷ The play script includes an address by a pupil, the only sources from a pupil for London. Sources providing a perspective from those outside of the MSC include the record of a diocesan visitation in 1905 and two letters from clergy.⁸ Cabrini visited London five times between 1898 and 1911. A number of her letters refer to London, particularly those written during an 11 month

³ 'Annotazione sulla fondazione di questa casa di Londra, ricevute da quello che ricordano le sorelle', Memorie, AG.(AL).

⁴ 'Memorie della Fondazione del Collegio in Forest Hill, Woodville Hall, Honor Oak Road', Memorie, AG. (MF).

⁵ Patrick Finn MSC, 'St Frances Xavier Cabrini in England with her Missionary Sisters', 1972. (Photocopy provided by the late Sister Mary Gough MSC).

⁶ 'Memories of Father Tony Logan' (alumnus) 2011, 2012, 2013; Sister Julia De Ath MSC, 'Memories', interview conducted by Maria Williams, Los Molinos, 2014.

⁷ 'To the Most Venerated Mother General and Foundress on the Thirtieth Happy Anniversary of the Foundation of the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of, the Sacred Heart by Her Affectionate Children the Pupils of the Convent at Wickham Road Brockley, November 14th 1910', Memorie AG; 'Sacred Heart School, Honor Oak Road, S.E.' . CR; 'The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Residing in London, Silver Jubilee of the Missions, 1914', CR.

⁸ 'Canonical Visitation of the Convent of Brockley Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 18 December 1905'; SDA; 'Letter from Father Seraphim Banfi to Bishop Amigo, November 10 1905', SDA, H.42.4; 'Letter to Fr du Plesny from Father Herbert E Cox, 23 October 1905', SDA, H.42.4.

stay in 1910-11. Two Travel Letters from 1898 and 1902 refer to London.⁹ There is only one letter to a superior, unlike Rome and New Orleans.

7. 1 Establishing conditions for Mother Cabrini's educational practice

Networks and authorities

Following the invitation to England from Bishop Bourne in 1896, Cabrini planned to travel on from Paris, to open a foundation there in 1898. She was delayed in Paris, so only had time for a scouting visit. Like those to Rome in 1887 and New Orleans in 1892, this was facilitated by religious congregations. A letter of introduction to the Jesuits at Farm Street, led to hospitality from the Sisters of Maria Reparatrix. Cabrini was accompanied by Sister Frances Kennedy, an English postulant, born in India, who had met the sisters in New York.¹⁰ Cabrini arranged for her to enter in Codogno, to assist with the English foundation.¹¹ On the way to Liverpool, to take the ship to New York, they stopped in Manchester, where Sister Frances had family, lodging with the Sisters of the Cenacle.¹²

In 1902 two sisters were sent as an advance party, as had been the case in New Orleans. The sisters, Mothers Stefanina Crivelli and Rafael Nefer, lodged with the Servite Sisters at 30 Gilson Road, South Kensington.¹³ Mother Gesuina Diotti organised letters of recommendation from the Servites and lay people in Rome.¹⁴ In 1898 and 1902 Cabrini was also helped in England by lay benefactors as she had been in New Orleans. In

⁹ 'Liverpool to New York', 8th November 1898 and 'London to New York', 23rd August 1902; Cipolla ed. *Tra Un'onda*, 353-394; 459-480.

¹⁰ *Epistolario* 5, 746.

¹¹ *Epistolario* 3, March/April 1898, 130.

¹² *Epistolario* 3, November 5, 1898, 202.

¹³ *Epistolario* 4, August 7, 1902, 49.

¹⁴ *Epistolario* 4, August 12, 1902, 51.

1898 she wrote: 'In Liverpool we have a good friend who got us first class tickets for the price of second class.'¹⁵ In 1902 Madame Arthur Heart, the mother of a pupil who was with the sisters in Paris, was the contact for Mothers Stefanina Crivelli and Rafael Nefer who arrived a month in advance of Cabrini and the other co-founders. They used her London address for correspondence. She gave Cabrini the use of her carriage and a donation of £200.¹⁶ Cabrini asked Mother Gesuina to request a papal blessing for her, to show her gratitude.¹⁷

Bishop Bourne directed her to Saint Mary Magdalene parish. Her first contact was with the parish priest, Father Sprankling, with whom she quickly established a good working relationship. From 5th August, the day after her arrival in England, he allowed Cabrini and five sisters to stay in the parish school.¹⁸ Mother Gesuina Diotti in Rome gained the necessary permissions from the *Propaganda Fide*, as England like the United States came under their jurisdiction until 1908. In 1904 Peter Amigo took over from Bourne as Bishop of Southwark. Cabrini did not enjoy the same warm relationship with him as she had with Bourne. Like the bishops in the North of Italy, Parochi in Rome and Corrigan in New York, he appears to have underestimated Cabrini. He was involved in a legal dispute with Bourne. This may also have contributed, if he saw Cabrini as Bourne's ally, given her contacts in Rome. Amigo was won over, however, by Cabrini's business acumen when she moved the school from Brockley to Honor Oak in 1910. The only civil authority referred to in the available sources is the London County Council in 1911. This was in relation to permission for

¹⁵ *Epistolario* 3, November 5, 1898, 202.

¹⁶ *Epistolario* 4, August 12, 1902, 51.

¹⁷ *Epistolario* 4, August 29, 1902, 57.

¹⁸ ML, 1.

building a chapel in the Honor Oak grounds. There is no reference to secular educational authorities.

Location and Need

The locations of the London houses are shown on Map 7 on page 272.

Cabrini described Brockley as 'stupendous with good air' and 'ten minutes from the centre of London'.¹⁹ Father Sprankling had started the Catholic mission in Howson road in 1895, when he was curate of Deptford. An elementary school was built first. The lower part was used for schooling and the upper part for a temporary chapel, until the opening of a purpose built church in 1899.²⁰ In 1898 the population of Brockley was 15,000 and there were 370 known Catholics.²¹ By 1903 there were 500 practising Catholics.²² Cabrini referred to Brockley as, 'a big parish where as yet there was no religious house thus offering good scope for us'.²³ The immediate need was for a Catholic secondary school for the daughters of those able to afford fees. The area was home to a number of prosperous families who had moved out from areas such as Deptford. A month before her arrival in England Cabrini wrote of 'the idea of a college and an Italian orphanage'.²⁴ There may also have been a demand for provision for children of Italians who owned restaurants and hotels, like the hotel where Cabrini and Sister Frances lunched during the scouting visit of 1898. Cabrini wrote that they 'made such a fuss of us that one would have

¹⁹ *Epistolario* 4, August 07, 1902, 48-9.

²⁰ Helena Walsh, *The Centenary of St Mary Magdalene's Church*. (London: Published privately, 1919) 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

²² *Ibid.*, 2.

²³ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 463.

²⁴ *Epistolario* 4, July 8, 1902, 88.

thought that we were relations'.²⁵ A number of pupils from these families attended the school in the years after the First World War.²⁶

In 1902 Cabrini opened the Convent of Our Lady of the Angels and Sacred Heart College in rented accommodation in Wickham road, Brockley, in the Deptford district of South East London. Wickham Road and the surrounding area in the north of Brockley had been developed in the second half of the nineteenth century. The southern part was still rural. The northern half of Wickham Road and Breakespeare Road, parallel to the west, are shaded yellow on Charles Booth's 1890 Map of London Poverty, indicating that the residents were very wealthy.²⁷ They were close to the railway station, shops and Saint Mary Magdalene Church.

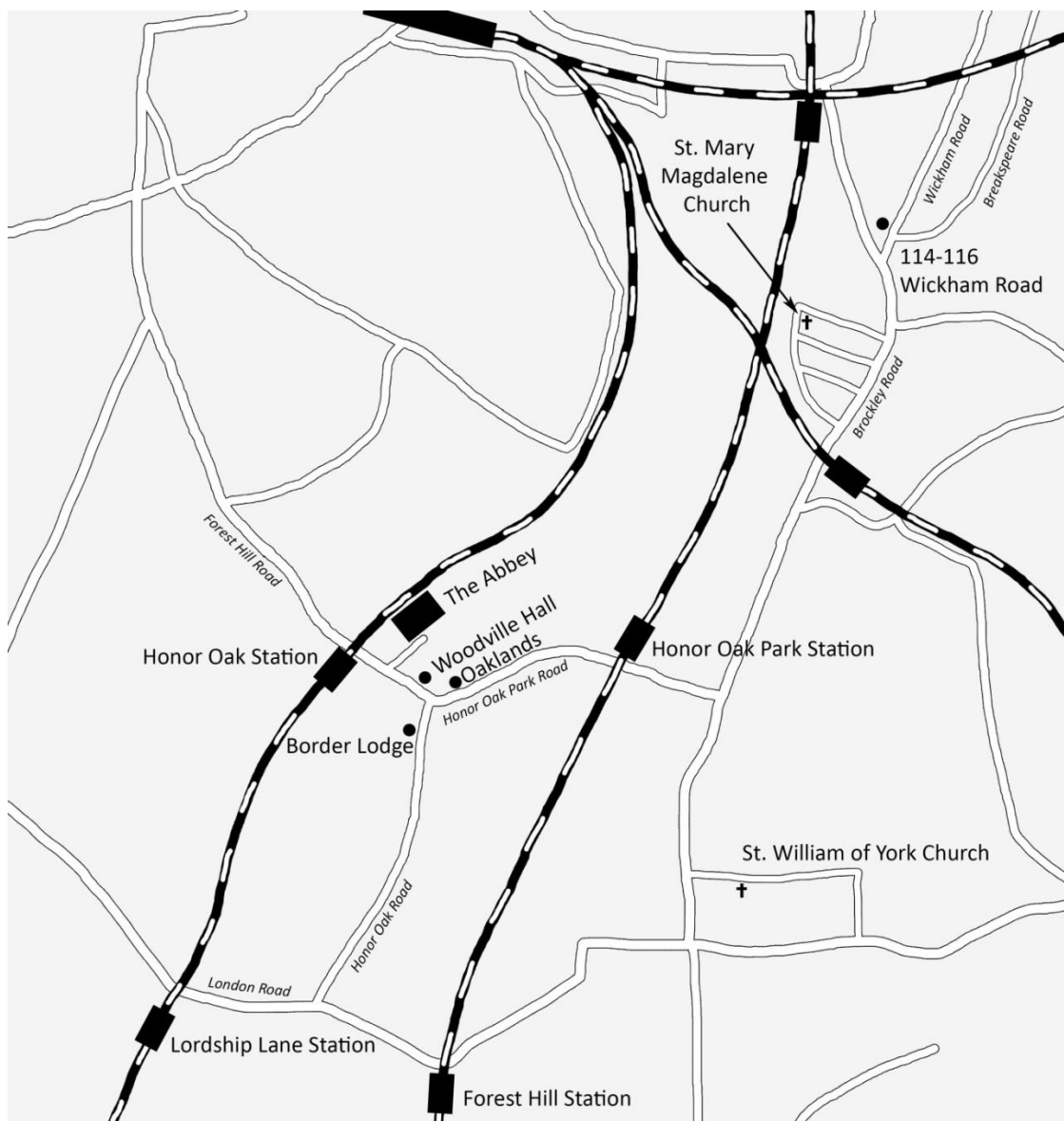
²⁵ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 392.

²⁶ Sister Julia De Ath interview, Los Molinos, 2014.

²⁷ Map of London Poverty, Brockley, 1890.

<http://www.ideal-homes.org.uk/lewisham/assets/maps/brockley/1890> (accessed 26.08.2014).

Map 7: Locations of London Houses 1902-1917



Finlay Wojtan, using [OpenStreetMap](#)

114-116, Wickham Road, Brockley, London, SE4 (Lewisham district)

Border Lodge, 10 Honor Oak Road, London, SE23 (Camberwell district)

Honor Oak campus (Woodville Hall, Oaklands, The Abbey), Forest Hill Road, SE 23 (Camberwell district)

Between 1910 and 1911 the sisters transferred their work to Honor Oak, a few miles away. In 1910 'the house in which the boarders stayed was sold by the landlord' and they were given notice to quit the other two.²⁸ The choice of a new location was dependent on several factors. As in Rome, it needed to be in an area where there was no other community of Catholic women religious. Cabrini was again advised by a sister from another congregation. The superior of the Congregation of Our Lady of Fidelity in Sydenham counselled, 'Your place is in Honor Oak.'²⁹ A site was found, conveniently situated between Honor Oak and Honor Oak Park railway stations. Between 1910 and 1912 four villas were purchased. Saint Francesca Cabrini School and an MSC convent stand on part of that site today. The new location was attractive, 'a beautiful hill from which one seems to be able to see the universe'.³⁰ Cabrini acquired the first two properties, Border Lodge and Woodville Hall at low prices.³¹ Amigo described Woodville Hall as 'the most beautiful property in London' and called Cabrini a 'business woman'.³² He even took the unusual step of changing the parish boundary as Border Lodge, the first Honor Oak property to be purchased, was in Forest Hill parish but Woodville Hall was in Brockley parish.³³

During the First World War, Cabrini was concerned for the safety of the sisters and pupils. The location of the properties at the summit of the hill in Honor Oak made them vulnerable. The Annals include accounts of

²⁸ MF, 3; MF, 76-77.

²⁹ ML, 6; MF, 14.

³⁰ *Epistolario* 5, October 15, 1910, 199.

³¹ MF, 17-19.

³² MF, 37; Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 323-324.

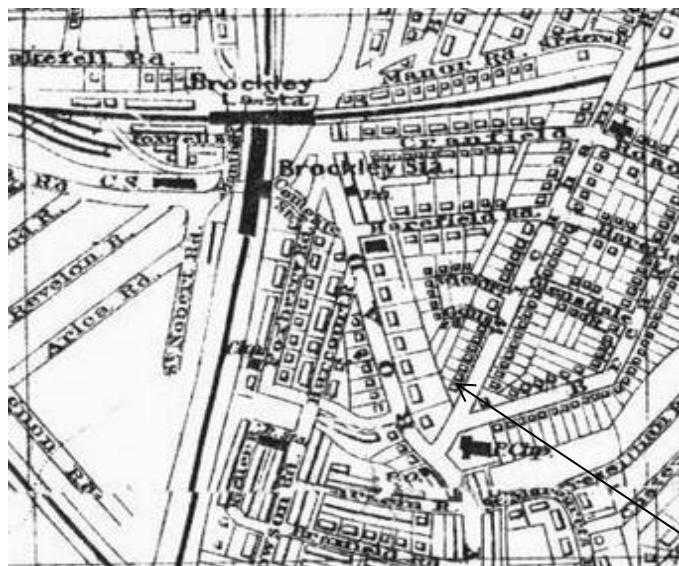
³³ 'Memories of Fr Tony Logan', March 02, 2012.

Zeppelin attacks.³⁴ An anti-aircraft defence point was built in the adjacent One Tree Hill Park.³⁵ From the start of the war sisters travelling to Europe were not able to pass through France but came via Spain sailing from San Sebastian to Falmouth. In 1915 a foundation was established in Okehampton, Devon. In March 1918 they also started a foundation in Wincanton, Somerset.³⁶

Accommodation, Resources and Funding

On 20th August 1902 the sisters entered 114–116 Wickham Road, two rented houses in Brockley ‘with full ecclesial approval’.³⁷ The speed and skill of Mother Gesuina Diotti in Rome enabled Cabrini to open the House, dedicated to Our Lady of the Angels, in two weeks.³⁸

Map 8: Map of Brockley, Showing 114-116 Wickham Road in 1917.



Numbers 114-116

Source: Kelly's Directory 1917

<http://www.ideal-homes.org.uk/lewisham/assets/maps/brockley/1917> (accessed 20.09.2014).

³⁴ MF, 136.

³⁵ MF, 131.

³⁶ MF, 148.

³⁷ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 463.

³⁸ *Epistolario* 4, August 16, 1902, 54; August 29, 1902, 58.

Kelly's Street Directory indicates that 114 and 116 Wickham Road were situated at the North West corner where it meets Brockley road.³⁹ The 1917 map from the directory, Map 8, on page 274, shows two adjoining semi-detached houses with small gardens.⁴⁰ The sisters soon found an additional house for boarders.⁴¹ Cabrini was never happy with the rented accommodation in Wickham road, referring to it in 1902 as 'a house which I do not find agreeable'.⁴² As the school roll rose it became overcrowded. In 1906 the *Memorie* state that she hoped to 'find a larger house which would be more suitable for our work'.⁴³ She quickly took advantage of the notice to quit in 1910, as until then Amigo had refused to allow a move.

The move to Honor Oak took place in a way similar to that in Rome. Although Border Lodge was purchased in October 1910, the transfer was gradual, with Wickham road closing the following summer. Border Lodge opened as a day and boarding school in October 1910. It became known as Sacred Heart Secondary School. The sisters moved into Woodville Hall on Christmas Eve 1910 and it developed as Sacred Heart High School, an elite international school. The building was appropriate:

standing back from the road with beautiful grounds, with railings and gates which were bought in Bruges at an exhibition-considered a work of art so much so that during World War II they were not confiscated by the government as all the others were.⁴⁴

In the summer of 1911 the chapel on the ground floor of Woodville Hall was replaced by a new brick building with electricity in the grounds.

³⁹ Kelly's Directories Ltd. *Post Office London Directory County Suburbs*. Annual volumes 1905-1913.

⁴⁰ Most of Wickham Road's original substantial houses remain, but numbers 114 and 116 do not.

⁴¹ ML, 2.

⁴² *Epistolario* 4, August 12, 1902, 51.

⁴³ AL, F.

⁴⁴ Finn, 'St Frances Xavier Cabrini in England', 5.

Unlike the Rome and New Orleans schools, a description of the inside of classrooms is available. It was included in the 1914 booklet:

The large and handsome reception rooms are arranged as classrooms opening onto the lawn and garden; they are lofty, airy and fitted with all that is necessary in attractive school furniture and present none of the hard and monotonous features of the generality of Class Rooms.⁴⁵

Similarities with Montessori schools are evident. The booklet was produced by Mother Domenica who had been Superior in New Orleans and was Superior in London from 1906. She had attended the 1911 Montessori training school referred to in the Rome case study. Light, airy classrooms were noted by participants of Montessori training in Rome. Anne George described the classroom in San Lorenzo as a 'school-room in a part of the piazza closed in with glass'.⁴⁶ Fisher described the classroom where she observed a class as 'a large, high ceilinged airy room'.⁴⁷ The Honor Oak classrooms were similar to these and the description makes clear that this is not the norm.

The situation was not, however, ideal. The schools were on separate sites as can be seen on map 7, on page 272. During 1911 Cabrini purchased two neighbouring properties, Oaklands and the Abbey. The owner of Oaklands had not thought of selling but Cabrini persuaded him.⁴⁸ The additional properties also provided more space, should the sisters need to leave Europe. By 1912 the sisters owned 'five acres of land with four houses scattered over the area-together with the chapel almost at a central point'.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ 'Silver Jubilee', 10.

⁴⁶ George, *McClure's Magazine*.

⁴⁷ Canfield Fisher, *A Montessori Mother*, 8.

⁴⁸ *Epistolario* 5, November 19, 1910, 210.

⁴⁹ Finn, 'St Frances Xavier Cabrini in England', 8.

Unlike New Orleans, Cabrini had to employ legal advisers to take her through all the documents relating to the properties.⁵⁰ A benefactor, Signora Lacroze, assisted with legal fees, paying £40 for the work relating to Woodville Hall.⁵¹ Funds to purchase the Honor Oak properties came from overseas. Cabrini sent Mother Carmela, who was from a well-connected Nicaraguan family, fundraising among her network of contacts.⁵² Sisters carried cash from Italy and the United States. In November 1910 Cabrini wrote to Gesuina Diotti in Rome asking her to send '20,000 lire, all that you have in gold sovereigns and the rest in dollars'.⁵³ She gave advice on packaging money, using fewer notes of higher denomination, and on security asking her to send 'Mother Vincenzina and a sister who says little, as even when they arrive here they must not chat, because no one must know why they are coming'.⁵⁴ In 1912 Mother Giuseppina Pisoni came from Paris with the amount necessary to complete the purchase of the Abbey.⁵⁵

Resources for the London schools were donated or brought from MSC houses overseas. In Brockley in 1902 Father Sprankling 'provided many things necessary for the new house' including furniture.⁵⁶ The sisters brought teaching resources from mission rooms in houses in Italy and the Americas. In 1902 Mothers Stefanina and Rafael brought music, drawings and other goods from Italy.⁵⁷ Mother Ancilla Duconge and Sister Cherubina Botti came from Chicago with music, schoolbooks and goods

⁵⁰ MF, 17-19.

⁵¹ MF, 120.

⁵² *Epistolario* 5, 713.

⁵³ *Epistolario* 5, November 19, 1910, 210.

⁵⁴ *Epistolario* 5, February 11, 1911, 239.

⁵⁵ MH, 103.

⁵⁶ 'Annotazione', B.

⁵⁷ *Epistolario* 4, May 17, 1902, 25.

useful for the new house.⁵⁸ Sister Agnese and Mother Albertina travelled from Italy via Paris with religious books for the sisters' library. They also brought samples of work in textiles and drawing.⁵⁹

In 1910, as the sisters were not vacating Brockley immediately and had more property to furnish, household goods came from Italy again. On 3rd October Cabrini wrote to Mother Valentina Pini, who had replaced Mother Maddelena Savaré in Codogno, asking for 'a little linen, good sheets, pillowcases, towels, mantili, tablecloths, napkins', as well as 'some of Mother Giuseppina's beautiful embroidery and something beautiful for the church'.⁶⁰ On 11th November she wrote to Mother Gesuina Diotti in Rome 'Now Mother Stefania should come with Mother Stanislao Sullivan and Mother Eletta Massardo who they will meet in Milan'. They were to bring 'two chalices one good and one ordinary and a monstrance like the one from the United States' and 'some beautiful church linen'. The three sisters were to go via Codogno to get the linen which was packed. 'Give the three as much as possible of every kind of thing needed for a new house'.⁶¹ Sister Tecla Tomedi brought a harp and Mother Stefanina Crivelli a violin.⁶²

In Brockley, income to fund the work was irregular. The sisters had difficulties raising money through 'the collection' as they did in New Orleans because the Diocese objected. The 1905 visitation report stated

⁵⁸ *Epistolario* 4, July 12, 1902, 40.

⁵⁹ *Epistolario* 4, August 7, 1902, 49.

⁶⁰ *Epistolario* 5, October 3, 1910, 193.

⁶¹ *Epistolario* 5, November 11, 1910.

⁶² *Epistolario* 5, November 19, 1910, 210.

clearly 'no begging allowed'.⁶³ By 1910 accounts included in the 1910 Report to the Holy See show that the sisters balanced their budget. With 25,000 lire income and outgoings of 23,400 lire, they had a surplus of 600 lire.⁶⁴ During Lent 1911 when Cabrini was staying in London they gained permission to do the Holy Week collection in Westminster as well as Southwark.⁶⁵ During the First World War Cabrini advised the superior in London to 'write cheques to withdraw money from the bank if not you will lose it. Only put it in when you have to pay interest'.⁶⁶

In Honor Oak the sisters had a small holding and an orchard and were able to keep chickens. 'The Abbey' was used as a boarding house for ladies to generate income. A leaflet lists the cost of board and lodging as 30 to 42 shillings per week 'according to the bedrooms and treatments required'.⁶⁷ These charges would be worth £117 and £164 today.⁶⁸ The Annals for 14th October 1914 refer to 'many ladies in The Abbey who had fled France and Belgium'.⁶⁹ The provision of chaplaincy services, however, proved costly. In Brockley they were provided in return for the sisters caring for the sacristy linen.⁷⁰ In April 1911 the cost in Honor Oak was £100 per year and Cabrini complained that 'the sisters have to work all year to pay the chaplain'.⁷¹

The First World War brought further changes to accommodation. On 12th September 1915 'Woodville', the last property on the block, was rented

⁶³ 'Canonical Visitation', 18 December 1905.

⁶⁴ 'Relazione Triennale dell'Istituto', 16-17.

⁶⁵ *Epistolario* 5, April 02, 1911, 246.

⁶⁶ *Epistolario* 5, April 08, 1915.

⁶⁷ 'Boarding House for Ladies, under the care of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart', LA.

⁶⁸ <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/#currency-result> (accessed 18/07/2018)

⁶⁹ MF, 130.

⁷⁰ Walsh, *The Centenary of Saint Mary Magdalene*, 2.

⁷¹ *Epistolario* 5, April 02, 1911, 246.

and the children from Border Lodge transferred to the main site. The Annals note that it was much better 'not to have to cross the street to deal with work for the boarders at Border Lodge'.⁷² Border Lodge was rented to the Red Cross for a fixed tenure for £50 and used as a hospital for soldiers.⁷³ In Okehampton, Devon, the Bishop of Plymouth gave the sisters the use of St Boniface's presbytery in Okehampton. There was no parish priest at the time. Mother Stanislaus Sullivan and Mother Candida Delmonico moved in on 12th March 1915.⁷⁴ In a letter of 8th April 1915 Cabrini advised on the kind of long-term accommodation they should look for:

You need a large field and a stable for animals and put down grain potatoes and vegetables so that you do not starve as the war could go on for another six years. Start a country college which will grow gradually and it will be a healthy place.⁷⁵

The sisters went on to rent a house, 'Leaze', next to the parish church. The accommodation was used as a holiday home but no record of a college has been found.⁷⁶

Recruitment

The Annals record that the initial intake to the Brockley School was recruited in a month, through personal contact. There were 30, 'who our sisters had gathered together in such a short time', at the inauguration on 23rd September.⁷⁷ As in Rome and New Orleans an *academia* was used to promote the new school. Bishop Bourne presided. The sisters recalled that

⁷² MF, 135. It was purchased by Mother Domenica in 1920.

⁷³ MF, 140.

⁷⁴ MF, 32.

⁷⁵ *Epistolario* 5, April 08, 1915, 509.

⁷⁶ MF, 129; AL, J.

⁷⁷ AL, D.

he ‘strongly recommended our new work to all the ladies gathered there’.⁷⁸ For Honor Oak, Cabrini used her transnational network to recruit students who might be described as ‘Catholics of consequence’, to borrow the term used by Ciaron O’Neill for the elite Irish girls who studied at the Holy Child Convent in St Leonards.⁷⁹ She used the MSC transnational network of contacts to distribute the prospectus for the new college in Europe and Latin America.⁸⁰ It stated that:

Foreign young ladies who wish to complete their education in English and to perfect themselves in languages and the accomplishments will be received as boarders.⁸¹

The Sister who oversaw the work in the United States was asked to give it to families who ‘often send their daughters to London’, especially the Portuguese and Spanish families.⁸² Cabrini wrote to Gesuina Diotti in Rome:

the head of the family of Signore Ortueta whose wife is with us in Paris could help us with a big favour; putting this into the hands of Cardinal Merry del Val, Vives and other influential people.⁸³

Cardinal Merry del Val succeeded Rampolla as Secretary of State at the Holy See. Vives was a Spanish Cardinal, based in Rome. Mother Maddelena Savaré, now Assistant Superior General, was asked to take the prospectus to Latin America with Mother Carmela Araña. Cabrini wrote: ‘wherever the ship stops disembark and give it to the principal families in order to have young ladies who will come here to learn English’.⁸⁴ She also

⁷⁸ AL, D.

⁷⁹ O’Neill, *Catholics of Consequence*.

⁸⁰ *Epistolario* 5, November 23, 1910, 211; November 24, 1910, 214; December 3, 1910, 219; December 16, 1910, 227.

⁸¹ ‘Sacred Heart School’, CR.

⁸² *Epistolario* 5, November 24, 1910, 214.

⁸³ *Epistolario* 5, December 3, 1910, 219.

⁸⁴ *Epistolario* 5, August 10, 1911, 290.

welcomed foreign visitors to Honor Oak including Signora Ortueta, mentioned in the letter.⁸⁵ The Annals also record that on 5th July 1911 'a rich lady with a little girl came to visit our Venerable Mother General. She is the mother of a boarder at our college in San Paulo in Brazil.'⁸⁶ The sisters took advantage of the interest in the new campus to promote the school and the Annals for 25th August 1911 record:

Mother Foundress provided us with such a beautiful house and a marvellous garden that enchants everyone and which attracts so many people to see the new college.⁸⁷

They also continued to publicise their work nationally and internationally, for example in June 1914 the Annals record that 'in these months Mother Superior took many photographs to send to New York for the silver jubilee album'.⁸⁸ In October 1914 when Mother Domenica and Mother Gesuina Passerini visited the Bishop of Plymouth to request permission to establish a foundation in his diocese they took three printed books showing the work of the Institute.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ MF, 88.

⁸⁶ MF, 82.

⁸⁷ MF, 96.

⁸⁸ MF, 123.

⁸⁹ AL, J.

The Founding Community

Table 19: London Co-founders, 1902

Name	Age	Born	Education	Role
M. Rafael Nefer	34	Wurtemberg(Ger)	E	Superior
M. Stefannina Crivelli	32	Crema	P	Fr, Mu, Sp T
S. Ancilla Duconge	27	New Orleans	T	Teacher
M. Carmela Araña	32	Nicaragua	E	N
M. Rosalia (Tarano or Carenzi)	N	N	N	N
S. Chrubina Botti	N	N	N	N
S.Agnese Ferraro	N	N	N	sacristan, zealatrice, collecting
S. Lucilla Masini	N	N	N	door & wardrobe
M. Paola (Bozzini)	N	N	N	NR

Key: E - Well Educated, Fr - French, M - Mother, Mu - Music N - No record, P - *Patente*, Sp -Spanish, T - Teacher, S - Sister

Cabrini was not able to play as much of a role in establishing the MSC community in London as she had in Rome and New Orleans. After entering the apartment in Via Nomentana, Cabrini stayed for seven months. She remained in Philip Street for almost a month. In 1902 she was in London for 17 days and spent only two in Wickham Road, as she had to be in Denver to set up the foundation there. She did not visit again until 1906. Details of the co-founder sisters in London are shown in Table 19, above. There were nine compared with six in Rome and New Orleans. The sources available give less information on the education of the London co-founders, than those for Rome and New Orleans. Four were well

educated: the superior, Mother Raffaella Nefer (1868- no record), her assistant, Mother Stefanina Crevelli (1871-1945), Mother Ancilla Duongé (1875-no record), and Mother Carmela Araña (1870-1948). The other five sisters may have been lay sisters working in the house or Italian sisters helping out, whilst learning English. Ages are available for only four of the nine. These ranged from 27 to 34 years.

Unlike Rome and New Orleans, the community lacked harmonious relationships during the start-up. There were three superiors in the four years between 1902 and 1906. Cabrini quickly became aware that Mother Rafael was not able to lead the community in establishing the conditions for an MSC school. As early as January 1903, she wrote to Mother Maddalena in Codogno that, Rafael 'will never make the college prosper with her character'.⁹⁰ She had not been a co-founder before. The new role was more demanding than her previous one in Rome, where she had tutored student boarders in German. She was a convert from Protestantism. Cabrini may have chosen her for Protestant England for that reason. Her assistant Mother Stefanina was far more experienced. She had her *patente*, had taught in Rome and been a co-founder in Nicaragua and Panama. Cabrini removed Rafael in 1905. Her successor Mother Agostina Chiodini (1862- 1942) had worked for 15 years in the United States. She had taken over from Mother Bernardina Vallsineri overseeing the MSC work there. Mother Agostina had to be removed for being imprudent with the finances in Chicago in 1905. In London she could not cope and would not leave her room in 1906.⁹¹

⁹⁰ *Epistolario* 4, January 12, 1903, 103.

⁹¹ *Epistolario* 4, July 4, 1906, 517.

As Cabrini did not visit between 1902 and 1906 she may have learned of these difficulties as a result of the requirement in the Rule for sisters to notify her of problems, referred to in the Rome case study.⁹² She may also have been contacted by the Diocese, following the 1905 canonical visitation, which forbade begging.⁹³ The report also noted 'renewal of vows to be seen to'.⁹⁴ In 1905 Father Herbert E Cox, who originated from Brockley parish and was sending a postulant from his parish to the MSC, wrote to Father du Plesny that he had heard from Fr Hayes that 'things were not so regular'.⁹⁵ Fr du Plesny drafted his reply on Cox's letter and pointed out that 'the order does good work' and advised that 'with the advent of a new superior in Brockley may also do good work in England'.⁹⁶ Cabrini herself took over from Agostina. Recognising that 'those who go to London should know how to work with skill which Mother Agostina did not' she sent for Mother Domenica Bianchi.⁹⁷ By then 40-years-old, she was one of the most experienced superiors. Since leaving New Orleans in 1895, she had been co-founder and superior of the houses in Argentina and Brazil. She had acted as a trouble shooter in Chicago dealing with the financial problems resulting from Mother Agostina's mistakes.

From the arrival of the sisters in Brockley the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the convent chapel, as Mother Gesuina had gained permission for this.⁹⁸ Father Sprankling was supportive and described by Cabrini as a

⁹² 'Regole dell Istituto' 35; 'Costituzione 1907', 18.

⁹³ 'Canonical Visitation of the Convent of Brockley Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart', 18 December 1905', H.42, SDA.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ 'Letter to Fr du Plesny from Father Herbert E Cox', October 23, 1905, H.42.4, SDA.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ *Epistolario* 4, August 28, 1907, 635.

⁹⁸ *Epistolario* 4, August 16, 1902, 54.

‘holy parish priest’.⁹⁹ There was no daily mass in the chapel. Domenica’s arrival coincided with that of the Assumptionist Fathers, who took over Mary Magdalene Parish in 1906. She was able to arrange for the sisters to have ‘Mass in the house every morning’.¹⁰⁰ Cabrini described the Assumptionists as having a ‘good spirit’.¹⁰¹ They provided a chaplain who was a ‘good and straightforward’ confessor.¹⁰² The founding of Honor Oak was quite different from that of Brockley as Cabrini, delayed by a dispute with a neighbour over the boundary to Woodville Hall, remained there from October 1910 until the following August, the longest time she ever spent in a new foundation.¹⁰³ The sisters knew the parish priest of Forest Hill, Father Hayes, as he had been the curate at Brockley.

7. 2 Implementing Mother Cabrini’s educational practice In the Schools

Pupils, Staffing and School Organisation,

Pupils

The pupils in this period were all girls, Unlike Rome and New Orleans. Sacred Heart College, Brockley was a fee-paying school, from infants through to late teens, including some boarders. Cabrini wrote in 1906 of ‘living among girls and their families’, indicating that some of the pupils were from the wealthy Wickham Road area.¹⁰⁴ In 1910, Cabrini wrote about the pupils in Brockley, referring to ‘the rich’ and ‘the poor’.¹⁰⁵ The Honor Oak fees indicate that there would no longer have been poor pupils in the school and the sister’s account refers to the Border Lodge School as,

⁹⁹ *Epistolario 4*, August 5, 1902, 46.

¹⁰⁰ ML, 2.

¹⁰¹ *Epistolario 4* August 17, 1906, 523.

¹⁰² *Epistolario 4*, August 17, 1906, 523.

¹⁰³ Finn, ‘Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in England’, 11.

¹⁰⁴ *Epistolario 4*, July 04, 1906, 516.

¹⁰⁵ *Epistolario 5*, July 19, 1910, 209.

‘where the less rich children went’.¹⁰⁶ Both Sacred Heart High School and Sacred Heart Secondary School took day scholars and boarders. The fees give an indication of the background of the pupils. They differed considerably. Those for the High School were double those of the Secondary School, giving an indication of the wealthy background of the pupils. The annual fee for a boarder was 55 guineas at Sacred Heart High School and £2.15.00 for Sacred Heart Secondary School. At today’s values they would be £4,514.44 and £214.97 respectively.¹⁰⁷ Fees for day pupils at both schools varied according to the age of the pupils. They are set out in Table 20, below.

Table 20: Fees at the Honor Oak Schools 1914

	Sacred Heart School	Sacred Heart Secondary School
	Entrance Fee	Entrance Fee
Boarders	4 guineas	1 1/2 guineas
Day Scholars	1 guinea	10 shillings
	Annual Fee	Annual Fee
	55 guineas	£2.15.00
	Termly Fee	Monthly Fee
Kindergarten	3 guineas	10 shillings
Preliminary	3 guineas	10 shillings
Junior	4 guineas	12 shillings
Senior	5 guineas	15 shillings

Source: The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Residing in London, Silver Jubilee of the Missions, 1914’, D, 89a, CR.

The majority of the pupils in London were from families of economic migrants from Italy and Ireland. There were also educational migrants whose parents wanted an international education for their daughters. The first boarders in Brockley were Madame Heart’s daughter from Paris and

¹⁰⁶ ML,14.

¹⁰⁷ Currency converter: 1270–2017, National Archives, available: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/#currency-result> (accessed 18/07/2018).

Carmen Roma, who were accompanied by two sisters from Europe.¹⁰⁸ In a letter of 1905, Father Banfi referred to the school providing 'for the children of my country throughout the diocese of Southwark'.¹⁰⁹ The sister who wrote *Memorie Londra* remembered receiving 'some Italian children born in London as boarders'.¹¹⁰ She also described the arrival of an aristocratic pupil from Madrid, where the sisters also had a school:

On a beautiful day in 1908 a young lady of high birth from Madrid, a certain Andreita de Quate, came to our school in Brockley to be admitted as a boarder. The house was not suitable for such a young lady.¹¹¹

The Sisters prepared 'a most beautiful apartment for the new and special boarder'.¹¹² Details available suggest that the intake in the Honor Oak schools was a mix of educational migrants, children of migrant families and refugees, as well as English pupils. The April 1911 census for Honor Oak gives the names of six boarders.¹¹³ One, Gina was born in Italy.¹¹⁴ Three others, Margaret Morisetti, Rita Pera and Amparo Largido have Italian names. The fifth, Meaimie O'Connor has an Irish name. The 1911 census records the ages of these boarders as 14, 13, 12, 11 and 7.¹¹⁵ Andrea de Quate, who had come to Brockley in 1908, is also listed aged 18. By December of that year 'Two young ladies from Argentina' had joined the boarders.¹¹⁶ Boarders from Central and South America 'did not stay long due to the outbreak of war. As soon as it was over they returned

¹⁰⁸ AL, C.

¹⁰⁹ 'Letter from Father Seraphim Banfi to Bishop Amigo, November 10 1905', SDA, H.42.4.

¹¹⁰ ML, 2.

¹¹¹ ML, 5.

¹¹² ML, 5.

¹¹³ 1911 Census of England and Wales, District of Peckham, sub-district Peckham, R914/2590, District 27, sub-district 6, enumeration district 21, Woodville Hall Honor Oak, 1-2. (SLHL)

¹¹⁴ Her surname is illegible.

¹¹⁵ 1911 Census.

¹¹⁶ MF, 97.

to their house.’¹¹⁷ Mother Patrick Finn remembered ‘daughters of diplomats from the Latin American countries’.¹¹⁸ During the First World War their place was taken by refugees from France and Belgium.¹¹⁹ They included ‘three orphans from a well-known Belgian family’.¹²⁰

Unlike Rome, not all pupils were Catholics. In 1910 the Annals refer to Cabrini as, ‘especially interested in the protestant children who are at our school in Brockley’¹²¹ In a letter of January 1911, Cabrini referred to two pupils, who were daughters of an Anglican clergyman. Fourteen protestant children are recorded as being received into the church in the Honor Oak chapel between 1912 and 1918. References to these events always state that the parents had given permission. The first was on 6th January 1912 when ‘the baptism of two little girls took place one a protestant with the permission of her parents’.¹²² In April 1912 ‘Ten children from the same mother with the permission of her husband were also received.’¹²³ Three who converted are mentioned by name: Nora Richards, Edna Banks and Hatty Evans. A 1912 copy of Edna’s birth certificate shows her full name as Edna Eugenia Banks and her date of birth as 13.10.1906. She was born in Liverpool and her father was a jeweller’s assistant.¹²⁴

¹¹⁷ ML, 14.

¹¹⁸ Finn, ‘Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in England’, 10.

¹¹⁹ *Epistolario* 5, March 12, 1915, 506.

¹²⁰ *Epistolario* 5, March 12, 1915, 506.

¹²¹ MF, 20.

¹²² MF, 100.

¹²³ MF, 106.

¹²⁴ Certified Copy of an Entry of Birth, sub- district of Wavertree in the county of Lancaster and Liverpool, 19th November 1912, LA.

Staffing

The nine co-founders were a multi-national, multilingual group. The superior, Mother Raffaella Nefer, was German. Her assistant, Mother Stefanina Crevelli, was Italian, Mother Ancilla Duongé, American and Mother Carmela Araña Nicaraguan. The other five sisters had Italian names. They may have been Italian or Italian American. Until 1916, the sisters were all migrants. The majority were Italian or American. Sisters Innocente Pavlic and Angelina Ivancic, who were in Honor Oak from 1917, were from either Trentino or Trieste to the north east of Italy, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before the First World War. The first English postulant, alumna Margherita Morisetti, completed her novitiate in Codogno and returned as Mother Alvina di Gesu in 1916. She was followed by Irene Higgins, recruited from Ireland, who became Mother Carmela Higgins.

The founding community were joined in January 1903 by two more Italian Americans, Mother Raffaella Archetti and Sister Rita.¹²⁵ As in the Rome start-up there was significant staff mobility. Sisters moved in and out of London as a result of the transnational context of the school. In March 1903, Mother Stefanina was called to Bilbao, as she spoke Spanish and was 'experienced in organising fiestas'.¹²⁶ Cabrini, concerned about the Brockley School, wrote to Mother Maddalena that Rafael needed a good assistant to whom she could 'leave the care of the order of the schools'.¹²⁷ Italian Mother Gabriella Linati, who had worked in New Orleans in 1895, arrived. She taught music and languages. She had served in the United

¹²⁵ AL, E.

¹²⁶ *Epistolario* 4, April 27, 1903, 159.

¹²⁷ *Epistolario* 4, March 1903, 137.

States so spoke English. She arrived from Rosario de Santa Fe, Argentina where she had been superior. She remained for only six months before she was called to Spain, to be a co-founder in Bilbao. She was, however, replaced by English American Mother Columba Whalen.¹²⁸ Mother Domenica Bianchi, who took over as superior in 1906 was, as seen in New Orleans, an experienced and able teacher.

Although Mother Domenica was the third superior in four years, her arrival in 1906 heralded a long period of stable leadership, comparable with that in Rome. During the transfer to Honor Oak, Cabrini served as superior and sent Domenica to Rome.¹²⁹ Mother Mansueta Dell'acqua, an Italian who had served in Brazil since 1903, took over for the last year in Brockley. She then acted as superior in Honor Oak between Cabrini leaving in August 1911 and Domenica returning in May 1912.

Keeping native-speaking English teaching sisters was also a problem. In 1907 three novices left Brockley for the novitiate in Codogno as new Holy See regulations for novices required them to spend more time there.¹³⁰ The names of two, Aloysius Darcy and Maddelena Donnegan, indicate that they would have been native English speakers, probably from Ireland or the United States. Following their departure Mother Columba Whalen was the only native English speaker. In May 1908, however, Cabrini called Mother Columba to Rio de Janeiro, where the Cardinal Archbishop had begged her to open a college, as there were a million inhabitants and few

¹²⁸ AL, E.

¹²⁹ She may have been sent to work on the 1910 triennial report to the Holy See as her signature appear on it along with that of Cabrini and the other three members of the General Council.

¹³⁰ *Epistolario* 4, March 17, 1907, 578; March 21, 1907, 581.

religious schools.¹³¹ Columba's replacement, the Italian Maria Ajani, spoke English well as she had overseen the MSC work in the United States for four years. The failure to replace Columba with a native English speaker, however, resulted in pupils leaving the school and going to the English convents nearby.¹³² There is no record of employing native English speakers as Mother Domenica had done in New Orleans.

School Organisation

The roll for some years between 1902 and 1912 is shown in Table 21 on page 293. The roll rose from 30 in 1902 to 45 by 1906.¹³³ By 1907 it was 90.¹³⁴ It fell after Mother Columba's departure in 1908. 12 pupils from Brockley, 5 boarders and 7 day scholars transferred to Border Lodge on 16th January 1911.¹³⁵ Other day scholars also continued to attend the Wickham Road School until the end of the academic year. It took some years for the roll to reach the 1907 figure of 90 again. It was 37 for the opening of the new school year in 1911, rising to approximately 42 in 1912.¹³⁶ There is no record of the roll during the war years, although the Annals state that 20 pupils made their confirmation in June 1917.¹³⁷ In September 1919 'the number of pupils rose to 85, the highest ever' in Honor Oak.¹³⁸ The age range and numbers indicate that pupils were taught in mixed-age classes.¹³⁹

¹³¹ *Epistolario* 5, May 21, 1908, 31.

¹³² ML, 4.

¹³³ 'Diocese of Southwark Convent Return 1906', 2, SDA, file H42.

¹³⁴ 'Relazione 1907'AG.

¹³⁵ MF, 152.

¹³⁶ MF, 30.

¹³⁷ MF, 96.

¹³⁸ MF, 152.

¹³⁹ This continued until the school became voluntary aided, Sr Julia De Ath, 2014.

Table 21: Pupil Numbers London 1902-1912

	Date	Month	Day	Boarders	Total
	1902	September	-	-	30
	1906	-	-	-	45
	1907	-	-	-	90
	1911	January*	7	5	12
	1911	September	32	5	37
	1912	September	35	7	42

*Number is for Honor Oak, none available for Brockley

Sources: ML; AL; MF; Relazione 1907'.

Table 22: Number of Sisters in London

Date	N	P	Total
1902	-	-	9
1903	-	-	10
1905	3	6	9
1906	3	7	10
1907	-	-	16
1910	-	-	18

Key: N-Novices, P- Professed

Sources: 'Relazione 1907'; 'Relazione Triennale dell'Instituto'; ML; AL :AG; 'Canonical Visitation of the Convent of Brockley Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 18 December 1905' and 'Diocese of Southwark Convent Return 1906', SDA.

Table 22, above, shows the number of sisters for the years 1902-1910. The number doubled from 9 to 18. There are a number of possible reasons. The rising roll would certainly have required more teachers. In addition London was used for sisters to improve their English. Additional sisters also stayed in London when there was a particular need. They came from continental Europe to take the place of Brockley sisters seeking vocations in Ireland in 1903 and to assist in preparing the Honor Oak accommodation in 1910–1911. A report to the Holy See gave numbers for 1910 as 18 and the 1911 census listed 21 sisters in Woodville Hall, Honor

Oak.¹⁴⁰ The numbers nevertheless, suggest that the ratio of sisters to pupils was more favourable than in Rome or New Orleans. In 1902 it was 1 to 3, in 1906, 1 to 4.5 and in 1907, 1 to 6. As in the other case studies not all were teachers. The classes would certainly have been a good deal smaller than both Rome and New Orleans.

Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

The London schools offered a broad curriculum 'to furnish the mind with cognitive and ornamental competences'. There is no specific reference to subjects of the curriculum in sources for Brockley, the teaching subjects of the sisters would indicate that the core curriculum and some of the 'Extras' offered later in Honor Oak would have been included. The 1911 prospectus and 1914 booklet for Honor Oak give details of both the core subjects and 'Extras'. The 1914 booklet states that boarders and day scholars at both Honor Oak Schools followed the same courses.¹⁴¹ The core subjects were listed as: Religious Knowledge, elements of Christian philosophy, English, Mathematics, elements of Natural Science, History, Geography, French, Drawing, Class singing, Domestic Economy and Needlework.¹⁴² German was also taught at the High School but Italian and Spanish were 'Extras'. The term 'accomplishments' is used rather than 'ornamentals'.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ *Epistolario 4*, March 31, 1903, 142; 1911 Census of England and Wales. By 1910 the number had risen to 18, 'Relazione Triennale dell'Istituto', 16–17.

¹⁴¹ 'Sacred Heart School', 1; 'Silver Jubilee', 1, CR.

¹⁴² 'Silver Jubilee', CR.

¹⁴³ See Michele Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1996), for an exploration of the term 'accomplishments'.

Needlework, Art, Music and Physical Training were described in detail in the 1914 booklet. As in the schools in Rome standards in needlework were high:

Needlework in all its branches is a very noted feature of this school. Close attention is paid to plain sewing in which each pupil is made proficient. The art needlework executed by the children is delightful and testifies to the cleverness of their teachers as may be seen in the exhibition of pupils work occasionally held at the convent.¹⁴⁴

The work samples of art and textiles, brought by the sisters, would have demonstrated the high standards expected. Some of the textiles were on show daily in the chapel as Cabrini had asked for 'some of Mother Giuseppina's beautiful handicraft work and some beautiful textiles for the church'.¹⁴⁵ Courses of lessons in dressmaking and patterns were available as an 'Extra'. Advanced painting and drawing of a high standard were also included in the 'Extras', 'very high class painting is taught and beautiful work is done by the pupils'.¹⁴⁶ The 1910 play script is written carefully in copper plate writing indicating that Calligraphy, a subject required for the *patente* examination in Italy, formed part of the 'accomplishments'.¹⁴⁷

With regard to music, class singing was part of the core curriculum. There were a number of musical options amongst the 'Extras'. In 1911 these were listed as 'Instrumental music and solo singing'. Boarders could also go to concerts. By 1914 there was an orchestra. Piano, harp and violin were taught. The booklet also refers to and pupils being able to attend

¹⁴⁴ 'Silver Jubilee', 17.

¹⁴⁵ *Epistolario* 5, October 03, 1910, 192-3.

¹⁴⁶ 'Silver Jubilee', 20.

¹⁴⁷ 'To the Most Venerated Mother General', AG.

the academy for voice culture.¹⁴⁸ Mother Giulia Chirone's piano lessons were popular. She was admitted to hospital in December 1913. The secretary, writing of her return a month later, referred to her as 'this sister for whom we had such a great need in the college'.¹⁴⁹ *Academie* were a feature of the London school as they were in Rome and New Orleans, although they were not held as frequently as they were in Rome. At Honor Oak each school had an annual *academia*, held in a large ground floor room at Woodville Hall, at Christmas. There are no details as in New Orleans.

In 1911 'tennis, basket-ball, croquet and many other healthy games' were available.¹⁵⁰ By 1914 other 'Extras' included health exercises, gymnastics, games and riding lessons. Like the first school in Rome, the Brockley School had little space for the outdoor play which the sisters valued. The 1911 prospectus referred to 'every advantage likely to promote the healthful exercise and recreation of the pupils'.¹⁵¹ Outings were also arranged for boarders at weekends and in the holidays:

On Saturdays they are taken to places of interest in London by their Prefect and Sub-Prefect and in the summer visits to Brighton and other seaside resorts near London are frequently arranged so that the children may have a few hours by the sea.¹⁵²

There are no direct references to citizenship education as in New Orleans. In 1911, however, there was an outing to participate in the coronation procession of George V and Mary in Camberwell. Cabrini considered this so important that she postponed the celebration of the feast of the Sacred

¹⁴⁸ 'Silver Jubilee', 16.

¹⁴⁹ MF, 142.

¹⁵⁰ 'Sacred Heart School', 19.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵² Silver Jubilee, 19.

Heart, from Friday 23rd June to the following Sunday, in order to attend. Friends 'who lived where the king and procession passed invited Mother to go to their house' and she was 'happy to be able to also take some sisters and the children'.¹⁵³ It was arranged by 'a good lady boarder' who lived in the MSC ladies' residence in Paris and came over with three sisters.¹⁵⁴

The script of a performance by the children of Brockley on 14 November 1910, the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Institute, indicates that in London, like Rome and New Orleans, religious education was taught in a creative way. In the performance, drama and symbolism were used to enable pupils to understand the importance of virtues and friendship with God.¹⁵⁵ Virtue, an important topic in Christian philosophy, is the focus of the play. The language used by Cabrini in her writings is reproduced. Three children meet the Child Jesus, who brings four bunches of flowers: roses, daisies, lilies and violets. He explains that these represent the virtues of charity, loving care, chastity and humility respectively. The Child Jesus gives each child a bunch of flowers to present to Cabrini and presents the violets, representing humility, himself. The message that virtues are important is clear. Of all that He could give to Cabrini, as God incarnate, the Holy Child chose to give virtues. Cabrini considered humility the most important. The Child himself presents the violets, representing humility. The children get to know Christ, as a friendly child who will help them. He tells them:

¹⁵³ MF, 80.

¹⁵⁴ ML, 8. This may well have been the Countess Spottiswood Mackin.

¹⁵⁵ 'To the Most Venerated Mother General', AG.

Do not fear me my little ones, know that I am the friend of all who come to me with the hearts of children.....I have come to help you.¹⁵⁶

The emotion of fear in children is countered with trust in God. The sisters approached this through friendship with another child, teaching Catholic understanding of divine friendship, in an age appropriate way. This also explained the motto of 'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me'. The Child Jesus was a particular focus in Honor Oak as the foundation was dedicated to Him. The Annals record the statue representing Him being carried into Border Lodge as follows: 'the Child Jesus was the first to enter'.¹⁵⁷ When the new chapel was complete Cabrini installed 'the Child Jesus to whom she had consecrated this new foundation'.¹⁵⁸

Pedagogy

From the outset there were qualified and experienced teachers in London. There are no details of the *academia* held at the inauguration of the school in Brockley on 23rd September 1902. It is, however, an indication of the skill of the sisters that they organised 30 children to perform in less than a month. Mothers Stefanina, Domenica and Filomena Maria were all well-educated and had their *patente*. Filomena Maria had her own school prior to entering.¹⁵⁹ Some sisters brought significant international educational experience to the London start-up. In addition to Mother Domenica, Mother Stefanina Crivelli (1871–1945) and Mother Columba Whelan (1871–1945) are good examples. Between leaving Rome in 1891 and arriving in London in 1902, Mother Stefanina taught in Granada in

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ MF, 17-19.

¹⁵⁸ MF, 89.

¹⁵⁹ Sr Julia De Ath, 2014.

Nicaragua, Colon in Panama, Buenos Aires and Rosario de Santa Fe in Argentina. She had also spent time in the United States on route to Grenada.¹⁶⁰ Mother Columba taught in New York, Colon, Buenos Aires and London between 1889 and 1908.¹⁶¹ Mother Domenica and Mother Filomena Maria Ajani, brought the important experience of having been MSC students in Milan, like Mothers Gesuina Diotti and Philomena Panzi in Rome. In 1914 there was a third as when Mother Gesuina Passerini, visited she found 'three of her old boarders from Milan'.¹⁶² The wording of the prospectus indicates that there may have been some lay teachers at Honor Oak, as there were in New Orleans teachers of some subjects were referred to as 'professors'.¹⁶³ Physical Training was 'conducted by a highly certificated professor'. It is likely that a layperson was employed. A Protestant teacher is recorded in 1918.¹⁶⁴ In the same year, Miss Kendall Eugenia, entered as a postulant and 'Mother Domenica put her as a lay teacher with the girls'.¹⁶⁵

Freedom and enjoyment were evident as in Rome and New Orleans. They were emphasised in the 1914 booklet. The grounds at Honor Oak were described as 'lovely gardens and woods where the children wander at will during recreation times' and the children enjoyed this freedom:

Pupils are as much as possible in the open air and have use of the lovely grounds including the woods where they enjoy themselves thoroughly. The pupils revel in tennis, basket-ball, croquet and many other healthy games.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁰ *Epistolario* 5, 673–4.

¹⁶¹ *Epistolario* 5, 703–4.

¹⁶² ML, 11.

¹⁶³ 'Silver Jubilee'.

¹⁶⁴ MF, 146.

¹⁶⁵ MF, 151.

¹⁶⁶ 'Sacred Heart School', 19.

Domenica's Montessori Training three years earlier may have contributed to the emphasis on freedom and enjoyment, when publicising the schools. Dorothy Canfield Fisher, who attended the same Montessori course as Domenica, wrote that 'the freedom accorded them (the children) is absolute'.¹⁶⁷ The Honor Oak dining room was described as follows:

The children sit at tables holding six which is more pleasant and sociable than the usual long tables as may be seen by the brightness and good spirit which animates each table.¹⁶⁸

The photograph from the 1914 booklet, Image 1, on page 301, shows that it was arranged in a similar way to that shown in the photograph of 'The Meal Hour' at Montessori's *Casa Dei Bambini*, in Canfield Fisher's book. This is shown in Image 2, on page 302.

¹⁶⁷ Canfield Fisher, *A Montessori Mother*, 30.

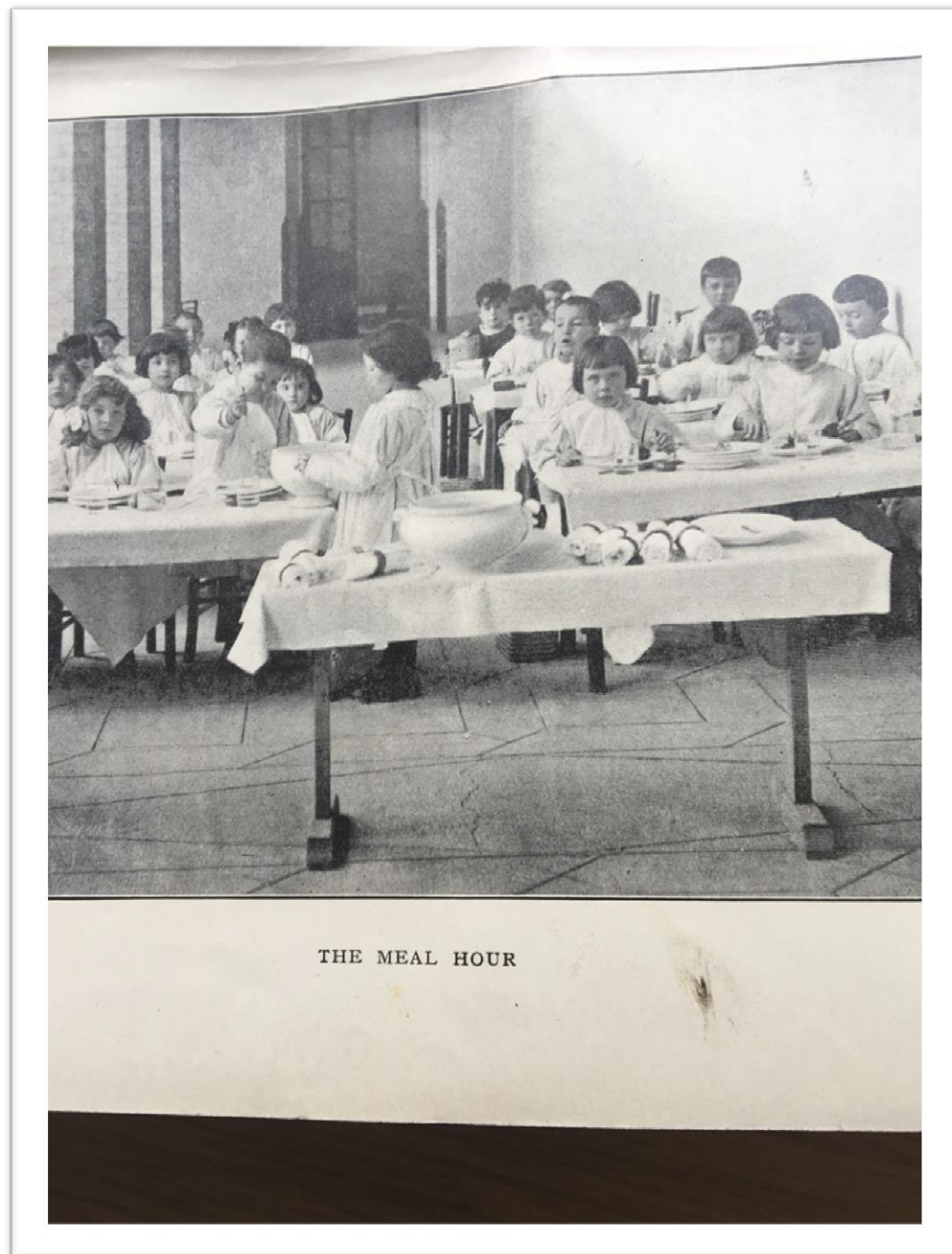
¹⁶⁸ 'Silver Jubilee', 13.

Image 1: The Dining Room of Sacred Heart High School, 1914



Source: 1914 'The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Residing in London, Silver Jubilee of the Missions, 1914', CR.

Image 2: The Dining Room at Casa Dei Bambini, Via Giusti, Rome, 1911.



Source: Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *A Montessori Mother* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1912), 23.

The sources for London also give some indication of loving care as a teaching method, the importance of meeting individual needs and character education. The object of the schools reflected that set out in the 1881 Rule and 1907 Constitutions.¹⁶⁹ The 1911 and 1914 pamphlets both start with the following sentence:

The Special Object of this Institution is to give the pupils a thorough and refined education based on solid religious principles, and to cultivate their minds teaching them at the same time the various accomplishments required by their position in society.¹⁷⁰

In the more detailed 1914 booklet there are two further sentences on pedagogy:

A notable feature of the training is the study of individual character and a patient watchfulness bringing out and fostering the latent good in each. Good conduct and piety are instilled into each tender mind by loving admonition.¹⁷¹

The 'study of individual character' would implement the guidance in the 1881 Rule that 'teaching will be adjusted to meet the needs of those being taught'.¹⁷² Similarly the 1907 Constitutions call on the sisters to 'study well the characters, the capacities and strengths of the pupils'.¹⁷³ In 1907 Cabrini also referred to 'the natural inclinations to the virtues', which is reflected in 'bringing out and fostering the latent good in each'. Loving care is evident in 'patient watchfulness' and 'loving admonition'. Small classes would certainly have made this kind of character education easier.

¹⁶⁹ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 25; 'Costituzioni 1907', 37.

¹⁷⁰ 'Sacred Heart School', 1; 'Silver Jubilee', 1.

¹⁷¹ Silver Jubilee, 1.

¹⁷² 'Regole dell'Istituto', 25.

¹⁷³ 'Costituzioni 1907', 37.

Assessment

The first reference to public examinations in London is in 1908. In that year, the school 'had progressed further and had begun to send the pupils who were ready to sit the public examinations'.¹⁷⁴ The 1914 pamphlet states that 'pupils are prepared for the Oxford, local and higher examinations and in the past have been most successful'.¹⁷⁵ In Honor Oak the pupils also sat the Royal College of Music examinations.¹⁷⁶ The examinations for religion were conducted by a Diocesan Inspector, unlike Rome where they were carried out by the parish priest. Only one is recorded, that of 26th September 1911, perhaps because standards were very high:

Today the Exam in Religion by the Diocesan Inspector; he gave two medals and two certificates in each school, something which never happens; they give one medal to the best in each school.¹⁷⁷

The language used in the 1914 booklet indicates that the sisters considered their standards to be high. For example, 'the highest levels of proficiency' were achieved in physical education including tennis'.¹⁷⁸ 'Piano, harp and violin are successfully taught'.¹⁷⁹ There are, however, no sources available with which to cross-reference these claims. The diocese inspected the community with a further visitation, like the one which had raised concerns in Brockley in 1905. They confirmed the progress since 1905. On Feb 12th 1913 it was noted that 'Father Segesser remained very

¹⁷⁴ M L, 4. It is likely that the students sat their examinations in another school which was a centre for public examinations.

¹⁷⁵ 'Silver Jubilee', 18.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 16.

¹⁷⁷ MF, 97.

¹⁷⁸ 'Silver Jubilee', 18.

¹⁷⁹ 'Silver Jubilee', 16.

satisfied with our community'.¹⁸⁰ Bishop Amigo visited unexpectedly at 8.30 on 1st June 1918. The secretary noted, 'He is pleased with us'.¹⁸¹

7. 3 Implementing Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice in the Community

In London as in Rome and New Orleans the sisters provided religious instruction and organised participative devotional experiences. The convent chapel in Honor Oak also served as a parish for many. Initially they worked in the parish of Saint Mary Magdalene and with Italian families elsewhere. They arrived in Brockley seven years after the establishment of the mission and three years after the completion of the parish church. They were instrumental in the early flourishing of St Mary Magdalene parish through provision of religious instruction and preparation for the sacraments of large numbers. 300 were given religious instruction in 1906 and 250 in 1907.¹⁸² The Sisters also prepared 80 for Holy Communion in both 1906 and in 1907.¹⁸³ From 1906 they provided informal education as they did in Rome and New Orleans. There were 'visits to the poor Italian families rekindling in many the love of our holy religion'.¹⁸⁴ As a result some had their marriages regularised and their children baptised.¹⁸⁵ In educating adults for reception into the Catholic Church in Honor Oak, the sisters gave one to one lessons, which often began informally. Cabrini modelled this in 1911, conversing with the Lutheran gardener, who was nearly seventy years old. 'She used much

¹⁸⁰ MF, 115.

¹⁸¹ MF, 149.

¹⁸² 'Relazione 1907', AG.

¹⁸³ 'Stato Dell'Istituto'; 'Relazione 1907'.AG.

¹⁸⁴ ML, 3; 1906, 'Diocese of Southwark Convent Return', SDA.

¹⁸⁵ ML, 4.

delicacy given his age and particular intelligence and natural goodness'.¹⁸⁶ Whenever she mentioned religion, however, he avoided the subject. She thought he was not interested. He was, however, the first to convert, entering the Church at Easter in 1912.¹⁸⁷ He called Cabrini 'the kind lady'.¹⁸⁸ A Signora Skinner entered the church at the same time. Sister Serafina prepared Mrs Murray, the wife of Cabrini's solicitor, who entered in December 1913.¹⁸⁹

For boarders the school served as a parish as it did for the sisters with mass, confessions and, with the lowering of the age requirement from 1910, First Holy Communion. Confirmations, however, took place in the parish church.¹⁹⁰ The 'pretty church' built by Cabrini in 1911 in the grounds of Honor Oak was described in the publicity:

Standing in the midst of the garden is the pretty church where the children assemble for Holy Mass at 7.00 each morning , followed by benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays, Sundays and festivals. Many beautiful ceremonies take place in the church forming red letter days in the convent life of the children.¹⁹¹

The 'red letter days' included First Holy Communion celebrations and functions for the Daughters of Mary from May 1911. Celebrations continued through the day on December 8th 1911, when two boarders from Argentina made their first Holy Communion:

The families of the boarders came and stayed for breakfast. At three in the afternoon the two renewed their baptismal vows and a protestant lady was

¹⁸⁶ MF, 105.

¹⁸⁷ MF, 108.

¹⁸⁸ ML, 8.

¹⁸⁹ MF, 130.

¹⁹⁰ MF, 106.

¹⁹¹ 'Silver Jubilee', 15.

received into the church. A Te Deum was sung and there was benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁹²

The sisters also made a day of it when Hatty Evans and five other children made their first Holy Communion, in December 1918. The church was full and:

after lunch there was Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and a beautiful function of the aspirants of the Daughters of Mary. Fr Riboldi preached on the Immaculate Conception.¹⁹³

In Brockley there was a branch of the Daughters of Mary from 1905, although there is no reference to the sisters contributing.¹⁹⁴ In Honor Oak they had a school branch, as they had in New Orleans and Rome. It was established on 31st May 1911, with Father Hayes celebrating a special service.

As the sisters' chapel in Brockley was inside the house the public were not admitted, in keeping with the regulations of the time.¹⁹⁵ This changed with the move to Honor Oak where the small church was built within the grounds of Woodville Hall and used by parishioners. The campus was on the parish boundary, some distance from the parish church with a steep hill to climb on the return journey. In Honor Oak the foundation functioned as a parish, similar in many ways to those established by the sisters in Rome and New Orleans. Having their own campus gave space and privacy for sisters, pupils and parishioners to participate in Catholic devotional traditions brought from Italy, making a distinctive contribution to their religious experience. In England like Rome, public Catholic

¹⁹² MF, 97.

¹⁹³ MF, 150-1.

¹⁹⁴ Walsh, *The Centenary of Saint Mary Magdalene*, 3.

¹⁹⁵ 1906, 'Convent Return', SDA.

processions were not allowed. Whilst this was new in Rome, in England it dated back to the Reformation. Pageants featuring religious as well as historical topics were popular at this time.¹⁹⁶ As recently as 1908, however, a Blessed Sacrament Procession planned by Cardinal Bourne for the Eucharistic Congress, held at Westminster had been banned by the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith.¹⁹⁷ On 15th June 1911 a Blessed Sacrament Procession took place in the grounds at Honor Oak.¹⁹⁸ A tradition was established and it became a well-attended annual event. From 1913 the route included The Abbey. 'There was a long procession with many parishioners from Forest Hill' stopping at altars in front of Woodville Hall, in the woods and in the Abbey.¹⁹⁹

7.4 Implementing Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice in the Education and Formation of Sisters

In London there were opportunities for sisters to develop their knowledge of pedagogy, languages, the Catholic faith and the dispositions needed to teach with loving care. The sources providing information on the education and formation of sisters in London do, however, differ from those for Rome and New Orleans. There is only one surviving letter to a superior. It was sent to Mother Domenica in 1915.²⁰⁰ The Annals contain some references to Cabrini's presence in 1902, a month-long stay to address problems in 1906 and a visit of a few hours for the sisters to make vows in 1907. The Annals and Cabrini's retreat journal are rich sources for

¹⁹⁶ See 'The Redress of the Past: Historical Pageants in Britain' at <http://www.historicalpageants.ac.uk/>, (accessed 26/06/18).

¹⁹⁷ Carol A. Devlin, 'The Eucharistic Procession of 1908: The Dilemma of the Liberal Government', *Church History* 63, no. 3 (1994): 407-425.

¹⁹⁸ MF, 78-9.

¹⁹⁹ MF, 114-5.

²⁰⁰ *Epistolario* 5, July 08, 1902, 39; *Epistolario* 4, April 08, 1915, 509.

her stay in 1910-11. They show the implementation of her educational practice in relation to both visible and invisible pedagogies. Cabrini had some direct involvement in educating the pupils and modelling her invisible pedagogy. In London, as in New Orleans, the MSC immediately implemented Pius X's decision to lower the age for receipt of Holy Communion. On 8th December 1910 the first group of seven year olds received the sacrament in the sisters' chapel.²⁰¹ Cabrini wrote that the children should 'understand what they are to receive'.²⁰² As part of teaching that understanding she knelt and made the thanksgiving with them.²⁰³ Concerned to counter fear with trust, she prepared the pupils for the move to their new learning environment in Honor Oak. She arranged for them to visit the new accommodation twice. On the visits she spoke to them. The secretary noted that 'she made an impression' and was 'happy to find herself surrounded by children'.²⁰⁴ In this way she demonstrated the impact of enjoyment in the classroom. In 1910 she also arranged for Sisters and children from Brockley to go to Christmas Mass at Honor Oak and stay until 10.00pm.²⁰⁵

There are two references to professional education. Cabrini visited a school of horticulture, as she was planning to open one in Denver.

She spent a whole day in a horticultural school, for she realized that she could find something there which would help her purpose for the future. An institution of this type could serve as a model for the one she was planning for her orphans.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ MF,26.

²⁰² *Epistolario* 5, December 15, 1910, 225.

²⁰³ MF, 26.

²⁰⁴ MF , 20.

²⁰⁵ MF, 28.

²⁰⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*,287.

As the Montessori Method clearly informed educational practice at Honor Oak, sisters who came after 1911 may, like Mother Domenica, also have attended the training in Rome. It seems more likely, however, that a 'cascade model' would be in use, with Domenica passing on training to other sisters as she had with the stenography in New Orleans. Sisters also taught each other languages as they had in Rome. During the journey from Italy to Honor Oak in 1910 Mother Stefanina was asked to 'teach Mother Eletta English speaking quietly'.²⁰⁷ London, like Paris and Madrid, was an important location to prepare sisters for work in the Americas. In 1902 Mother Albertina was expected to brush up her English on route to the United States.²⁰⁸ Mother Filomena Maria Ajani stayed in Brockley for a month in 1903. This was 'to perfect her ability in the English language', prior to taking up the post overseeing MSC work in the United States.²⁰⁹

Cabrini wrote with guidance to Mothers Rafael and Stefanina who were sent to London a month in advance, as was the case in New Orleans.²¹⁰ The advice integrated the practical and the spiritual. She gave advice on accommodation and emphasised Bishop Bourne's authority 'let his words guide you'.²¹¹ On living the Institute's motto 'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me' she emphasised trust, writing:

Be holy and always united to Jesus, with much trust in his most Divine Heart. In proportion to your trust you will see miracles with which, if you wish, you will be able to amaze me.²¹²

²⁰⁷ *Epistolario* 5, November 11, 1910, 209.

²⁰⁸ *Epistolario* 5, August 07, 1902, 3.

²⁰⁹ *Epistolario* 4, March 31, 1903, 142.

²¹⁰ *Epistolario* 4, July 08, 1902, 38.

²¹¹ *Epistolario* 4, July 08, 1902, 38.

²¹² *Epistolario* 4, July 08, 1902, 39.

During the start-up the life of the community was not conducive to the ongoing education and formation of sisters. Mother Rafael lacked the humility needed for leadership and Cabrini wrote that if she 'had a defect it was pride, treating her sisters badly'.²¹³ Of Agostina, Cabrini wrote in 1906 that 'those who go to London should know how to work with skill which Mother Agostina did not'.²¹⁴ Consequently, she was not in a position to support others in the development of the skills needed for London.

The sources written by the sisters are very positive regarding the impact of their devotional life and annual retreats. The writer of the Annals described the significance of daily mass in the formation of the sisters in the practice of the virtue of charity. When it was introduced in 1906, 'the community took on a new spiritual vigour that continued to grow manifesting itself in the work of the directress and the sisters'.²¹⁵ They began the visits to poor Italian families at that point. The first record of an annual retreat is in July 1907.²¹⁶ The Spiritual Exercises are noted for subsequent years and were given in Italian by Servite, Redemptorist or Jesuit priests. Father Banfi also gave one in 1916. The records of these events in the testimonies of the sisters and Annals are similar to those of the house in Rome. There are short phrases summarising the benefits. In December 1911, when Rev P Palliol, a Redemptorist, led the retreat, the sisters enjoyed 'grace filled days', which were a good preparation for Christmas.²¹⁷ The secretary noted that in the Spiritual Exercises from 28th

²¹³ *Epistolario* 4, August 28, 1907, 634.

²¹⁴ *Epistolario* 4, August 28, 1907, 635.

²¹⁵ ML, 2.

²¹⁶ AL, G.

²¹⁷ MF, 98.

August to 7th September 1917, Father Beretta SJ 'filled us all with fervour for the love of God'.²¹⁸

Like the superiors in Rome and New Orleans, Cabrini organised day retreats whilst in the role in Honor Oak. Her retreat notes indicate the contents of two talks. One was for the feast of All Saints (1st November 1910) and the other the weekend prior to the feast of Pentecost (27-28th May). On the anniversary of the founding of the Institute, 14 November 1910, the Annals refer to a talk by Cabrini, giving 'many beautiful lessons in virtue'.²¹⁹ As an experienced teacher, she followed guidance she gave in the Rule to 'use all possible diligence to plan your teaching programmes in good time'.²²⁰ She had noted that 'reason, faith and the example of the saints' united to show the practice of virtue.²²¹ She listed seven points regarding the practice of virtue needed, 'to unite oneself in Christ to God'. She also wrote that humility was the foundation of all the other virtues and that 'good works are nullified if not seasoned and perfected by humility'.²²² These retreat notes, like her letters, include many references to scripture.²²³ The notes for 27-28th May are headed 'Pentecost 1911' indicating that the retreat was to prepare for Pentecost.²²⁴ On the feast, 4th June 1911, she gave a talk on the seven gifts and twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.²²⁵ In her notes she had focussed on the fruit of patience, using the example of 'tribulation borne with love' by the patient soul. She wrote of 'the need to understand practically and not speculatively that

²¹⁸ MF, 145.

²¹⁹ MF, 26.

²²⁰ *Costituzioni* 1907, 36.

²²¹ Cipolla and Canale eds., *Pensieri e Propositi*, 194.

²²² *Ibid*, 194.

²²³ The editors have included scripture references in the margin of the published work.

²²⁴ Cipolla and Canale eds., *Pensieri e Propositi*, 95.

²²⁵ MF, 69-70.

tribulations are like a second novitiate for the religious'.²²⁶ She linked bearing suffering to a loving relationship with God, articulating this with reference to the motto of the Institute:

Suffering with love, He remains in us with a special predilection and with the loving care of a most tender father. *Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat*'.²²⁷

As explored earlier in her letter to the sisters in Rome in 1905 and New Orleans for Lent 1895, she expresses an understanding of 'self-surrender' as 'a passionate following of the heart's desire'.²²⁸

Cabrini's loving care is evident in her intervention when sisters failed. It enabled her to view the weaknesses of individuals in a matter of fact way. There are a number of examples of Cabrini's practice of giving a fresh start to staff who failed. London was intended as such for Sister Ancilla Duongé, who came from Chicago in 1902.²²⁹ There is no indication that it did not succeed. In 1905, Cabrini gave Rafael a fresh start in Spain although she subsequently left the MSC. Her replacement in Brockley, Mother Agostina, came to London after difficulties in the United States.²³⁰ Cabrini had written to the directress of Paris 'she deserves to be thrown out of the Institute but I would not do that'.²³¹ After Brockley and a period with few responsibilities, Cabrini sent her to Bilbao as assistant and bursar.²³² She returned aged 68 for the setting up of Honor Oak.²³³ Cabrini also dealt

²²⁶ Cipolla and Canale eds., *Pensieri e Propositi*, 195.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 196.

²²⁸ See Rome Case study, 206.

²²⁹ *Epistolario* 5, 750.

²³⁰ *Epistolario* 5, 699. Also Testimony of Frances Xavier Cabrini stating disapproval of overspend by Mother Agostina at Columbus Hospital, August 16, 1904, Folder 48, CR.

²³¹ *Epistolario* 4, November 02, 1904, 363.

²³² *Epistolario* 4, August 28, 1907, 635.

²³³ '1911 Census'.

with Mother Carmela Arana who had gone to see her family in Manchester without permission.²³⁴ In this she followed her own guidance to superiors in the 1907 constitutions:

Do not stifle or oppress the lively, impetuous and alert spirits; rather be compassionate and support these defects which are inevitable in them, especially in the beginning: know how to cultivate such subjects with special care and activities; these will succeed in being useful to the Institute.²³⁵

She had given similar advice to Mother Gesuina in Rome and Mother Bernardina in New Orleans when they had dealt with such situations. Cabrini sent Carmela to Codogno for the Spiritual Exercises. Mother Valentina in Codogno, who had taken over from Mother Maddelena as novice mistress, was to help her make a fresh start. Cabrini advised, 'tell Mother Carmela that it is better to tell you everything so that you will be better able to direct her on how to become a good and true religious.'²³⁶ Loving care, Cabrini's positive emotional response in these situations indicates her concern for the re-establishment of trust.

Enjoyment was important in MSC religious life and in keeping with a morality of happiness. Cabrini summed this up when writing on Charity in a retreat note of October 1889:

I must try to practise it in every circumstance with words, works, thoughts and in all enjoying (*godendo*) imitating in this way the beloved heart of my Jesus²³⁷

After the Christmas Mass in 1910 Cabrini 'gathered the sisters together for a little wine and sweets'. Mother Maria Ajani remembered that this was

²³⁴ *Epistolario* 5, August 24, 1911, 298.

²³⁵ 'Costituzioni 1907', 36.

²³⁶ *Epistolario* 5, August 14, 1911, 293.

²³⁷ Cipolla and Canale eds., *Pensieri e Propositi*, 95.

the custom on feast days.²³⁸ She would also take them to the woods in the grounds, as on Ascension Day, when they looked for four leafed clovers.²³⁹ The feast days of sisters were celebrated, as well as Cabrini's birthday.²⁴⁰ The community benefited from the ability of Cabrini and her assistant general superiors to create a happy environment. In her biography of Cabrini, De Maria wrote of 'the infectiousness of her spirit' and this is evident from records of her time in London.²⁴¹ In 1918 sisters recalled that in August 1907, although she 'stayed only a few hours', the joy she brought remained with them for a long time.²⁴² This invisible pedagogy contributed to the institutional formation of the sisters during her time acting as superior in Honor Oak. Similarly when her assistant Mother Gesuina Passerini visited for four days in October 1912 the secretary wrote of 'an angelic visit' which brought 'the spirit of God' to the community and was the 'best visitation'.²⁴³

Cabrini wanted the community to live simply and place their trust in Christ:

the Child Jesus is the founder of this house and will think of everything if the sisters live with true simplicity which equals innocence and other precious gifts from heaven.²⁴⁴

This did not, however, mean a lack of awareness of events in the world outside the convent. The London sisters were kept up to date with current affairs. Cabrini, who had used the Travel Letters for this since 1890, was able to do it in person during recreation whilst in London. She informed

²³⁸ Julia De Ath, 2014.

²³⁹ MF, 65.

²⁴⁰ 'Silver Jubilee'.

²⁴¹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 282.

²⁴² AL, G.

²⁴³ MF, 108.

²⁴⁴ *Epistolario* 5, December 24, 1910, 231.

the sisters about the anti-clericalism in Portugal which the Annals refer to as 'the sad happenings in Portugal'.²⁴⁵ On her return from a meeting with Amigo in October 1910 she told them of the conversion of five protestant ministers in Brighton.²⁴⁶ There were also outings. In 1902 the sisters were able to view 'the impressive procession made for the coronation' of Edward VII and Alexandra from the house of 'the family of one of the king's gentlemen'.²⁴⁷ The sisters would also have benefitted from accompanying pupils to the places of interest, lectures and concerts referred to as 'Extras' in the 1914 booklet.

Conclusion

MSC educational provision in London between 1902 and 1918 differed in several respects from that in Rome and New Orleans. It only provided for girls from wealthier families. Pupils and teachers were both multi-national and multi-lingual groups. The former also included girls from Anglican families. The sources do much to clarify two important aspects of Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice. One is the progressive, in terms of both forward-looking and child-centred education. The other is the development of virtue, clarifying her 1881 aim 'to form the heart to the love of religion and the practice of virtue'.

The establishment of an elite international school was a progressive move in educational provision for girls. It is indicative of Cabrini's recognition of new opportunities open to women from wealthier families, as is evident in the Rome study. Again her approach focuses on education for both

²⁴⁵ MF, 16.

²⁴⁶ MF, 16.

²⁴⁷ *Epistolario* 4, August 12, 1902, 51.

professional preparation and personal growth. The curriculum in both schools in Honor Oak was broader than that in the fee-paying schools in Rome, including philosophy and science. The many 'Extras' allowed for individual needs. The words 'enjoyment', 'simplicity' and 'trust' feature in sources. There is more emphasis on 'freedom' in London. Progressive, child-centred education, emphasising freedom and enjoyment, is celebrated in the 1914 booklet, marking the Silver Jubilee of the missions. Other MSC communities produced celebratory documents recording the history of their missions as, for example, Rome in 1912 and New Orleans in 1914. Montessori trained Mother Domenica's 1914 booklet from London provides a contrast, celebrating current achievements.

The 11 months spent by Cabrini in Honor Oak, between 1910 and 1911, are well documented in her letters, retreat notes and the detailed House Annals. Her commitment to an intellectual understanding of religion is evident. A practical approach to the mystical is also shown, for example, by her kneeling with children after receipt of Holy Communion. The 'loving care' central to MSC educational practice is clarified in the script of the 1910 play performed for her. It is one of the four virtues presented by the Child Jesus, placing it on a par with charity, humility and chastity. The play also provides a further example of creative teaching of religion.

Relationships with the Church authorities were more mixed in London. Cabrini had a warm relationship with Bourne. Amigo was more restrictive. The difficulties of Mothers Rafael and Agostina, between 1902-and 1906, may have given a less than favourable impression of the Institute. The importance attached to virtue by Cabrini is evident by its absence initially.

Rafael and Agostina lacked the virtues of humility and fortitude required for MSC educational leadership. The situation does bring into question Cabrini's judgement in appointing them. She practised subsidiarity through supportive delegation. The demands of the global expansion may have restricted her ability to support them in spite of her commitment to solidarity. This situation in London highlights the vital role played by the sister leaders, like Mother Domenica, working directly with Cabrini. Domenica shared Cabrini's vision of Catholic educational practice. In addition, as is evident in her experience in New Orleans, she had grown in virtue accompanied by Cabrini. This enabled her to work in solidarity with sisters and the community to implement this practice.

Chapter 8: Mother Cabrini's Educational Practice

Introduction

This chapter considers the key elements of Cabrini's educational practice identified in the case studies, looking at consistencies and differences and whether these elements are evident in other MSC foundations between 1880 and 1917.

The range of sources written by Cabrini, sisters, pupils and those outside the Institute used in the case studies provide much data to consider these issues. There are silences nevertheless. With regard to school organisation, no timetables have been found. Although the subjects of the curriculum are evident it is not clear how much time was devoted to each and whether this varied according to age, the type of school, pupils and location. There are no examples of pupils' work to view apart from the 1910 London play script. Whilst the descriptions of the pupil performances are engaging, there are no visual records. Whilst there are pupil testimonies they are few in number. No inspection reports have been identified. The House Annals for Rome, London and New Orleans do not cover the full period or the same periods across the three. There are no testimonies from the superiors who experienced difficulties including Mothers Rafael and Agostina in London. Testimonies from the sisters who rebelled in Europe in 1905 are also lacking and might give insights into the concerns of some teachers.

Cabrini did not write a treatise on Catholic educational practice. She did, however, study the practice she observed. She makes reference to this approach in her letter to the Italian Women's Congress in 1908. She was

invited to speak as an expert on women and migration. With reference to the topic, she writes 'I have only studied this difficult problem practically by coming into contact with the poor'.¹ She contrasts her approach with that of scholars referring to 'our great sociologists'. She also advises the Congress participants to study the data and statistics in the Bulletins of the Commission for Emigration. Her letter indicates that she sees the three approaches complementing each other.

Cabrini's letters used for the case studies were written with the purpose of mobilising her practice. Part of achieving this mobilisation was to share the fruits of her reflection on her practical study of education. Taken with other records of her input, three key elements of her understanding of Catholic educational practice have been identified. They are:

1. The choice of subject disciplines, with regard to local needs
2. Effective teaching of subject disciplines
3. Strategies to support access to education

Each was important to achieve her stated aim:

to furnish the mind of the pupils with cognitive and ornamental competencies in order to have the opportunity to form their hearts to the love of Religion and the practice of virtue. The teaching will be adjusted to meet the needs of those being taught²

Each will be considered in relation to both Cabrini's understanding and how this understanding is evident or absent in the educational work of the MSC in this period.

¹ Scaraffia, 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini'.

² 'Regole dell'Istituto', 25.

8. 1 The choice of subject disciplines, with regard to local needs

As Cabrini did not specify subjects to be taught in schools there was the potential for a range of different offers to achieve her aim. The subjects of the core curriculum evident in the case studies were, however, consistent in the range of schools across the Institute. They comprised: the national language, mathematics, visual and performing arts, celebrations and religious and moral education.³ In New Orleans and in London, after the move to Honor Oak, gymnastics was included. In fee-paying schools a foreign language was also part of the core, as in London and Rome. All the schools for migrants in the Americas offered Italian, like New Orleans. The London international school had the broadest core curriculum. History, geography, natural science, painting, domestic economy, philosophy and tennis were included. Pedagogy was a subject for the student boarders in Rome and in Milan as well as for the sisters.

The 'Extras' allowed for individual interests. Advanced needlecraft, drawing and modern languages, offered in the fee-paying schools in London and Rome, were also offered in Latin America. The London international school had a wider range of 'Extras' than Rome. The options in instrumental music, solo singing and sport were also offered in Latin America. It is evident in New Orleans that orphans had more input than other pupils in free schools. The domestic subjects such as ironing were their 'Extras'. The sodalities might be considered 'Extras' in relation to those who wanted more input on religious education.

³ In a 1913 report prepared for the Holy See Cabrini listed these subjects as the core curriculum in all the schools in America, see: March 10th, 1913, 'All'Eminentissimo Signor Cardinale Segretario' 5.

In the case studies it is clear that Cabrini and the sisters saw the intrinsic value of subject disciplines. They contributed to the understanding of God's creation and all provided opportunities to 'form the heart in the love of religion and practice of virtue'. In choosing them, however, requirements of the church and state, local progression opportunities and parental demands were also a factor as were the facilities available in their school buildings. Outside of Italy Cabrini and the sisters sought advice on these requirements from other congregations and local contacts. Father Kiernan advised on the school system in Buenos Aires in 1896.⁴ When setting up the college in Madrid in 1900, Dr Rufino Blanco (1861-1936), advised on textbooks and assisted in procuring them.⁵ Parents were also consulted. In Nicaragua, in 1891, Cabrini formed a parents' committee for advice.⁶ In New Orleans the sisters of the advance party visited families to discuss the new school in 1892.

In Panama, Italian was offered following requests from parents in 1895.⁷ By January 1899, with the proposed Panama Canal, Cabrini envisaged new demands. She wrote: 'if the Americans build their canal, as they say they will, we will see a great need for the English language'.⁸ Cabrini prioritised the national language to prepare migrant pupils for life in the United States. As many migrants returned to Italy, learning their heritage language prepared them for employment there as well. Teaching foreign languages to wealthier pupils prepared some for visits abroad. Annmarie Valdes, however, has shown that modern language ability was also

⁴ *Epistolario* 2, February 6, 1896, 600.

⁵ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 224. Blanco went on to be the author of many works on pedagogy.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁷ *Epistolario* 2, July 13, 1895, 531.

⁸ *Epistolario* 3, January 6, 1899, 250.

important in the agency of middle class women in nineteenth century America.⁹ The sisters became role models as the languages taught as 'Extras' were an important means of generating income.

Needlecraft provision varied in different geographical locations. A photograph taken in the Buenos Aires orphanage, with the caption 'Little Spinners' shows girls using spinning wheels.¹⁰ In the community provision in Rome young women learnt to embroider. In New York girls who attended public schools joined classes in the church basement, learning to make and repair clothes.¹¹ De Maria identified needlecraft as important for women in creating comfortable homes and for the wealthy, using their leisure time. Cabrini's letters and the house annals, however, indicate an awareness of the need for poorer women to progress to employment. This was born of the sisters' experience of funding their first school and orphanage in Codogno by sewing late into the night.¹²

Art was an important leisure pursuit. Cabrini referred to the practice of sending home-made pictures as gifts, writing from Treviglio in 1882. She asked Sister Maria in Codogno to draw 'a beautiful little picture, just flowers, but on rice paper'.¹³ It was for the eight year old daughter of the local education administrator. Margaret Nash has shown that middle class women in the United States were able to progress to paid employment,

⁹ Annmarie Valdes, "'For you seem principally to indulge in brain work pure and simple': Utilizing Life History Methods to Connect Women's Education and Agency in Nineteenth Century America", *History of Education Researcher* 97, May 2016.

¹⁰ MSC, *Cinquant'Anni di Vita*.

¹¹ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 218.

¹² Ibid., 36.

¹³ *Epistolario* 1, July, 1882, 61.

teaching art in private schools and normal schools.¹⁴ Cabrini and her sisters would have been aware of these opportunities from their network contacts. The artist, art historian and writer, Eliza Allen Starr, who corresponded with Cabrini, was a good example.¹⁵ The aunt of Ellen Gates Starr, who founded Hull-House¹⁶ with Jane Addams, was an MSC benefactor in Chicago. Music was another important leisure pursuit. Margaret Nash has demonstrated that singing and instrumental skills also provided 'a means honourable of support' for women.¹⁷ Sisters again provided role models. A number of Milan student boarders who entered the MSC, like Mother Saverio De Maria, had the Diploma in Music.¹⁸ The music teacher in Panama in 1895, Mother Cecelia Pertusi, had 30 students for piano and 12 for singing. The former cost 20 scudi per month and the latter 12.

Cabrini also considered religious and moral education as preparing the pupil for progression to employment and to contribute to society. For some this meant progression to the religious life, for example, Bishop Charles and the alumnae who entered the MSC. It is clear from her advice to the Magistero students that Cabrini envisaged an important role for Catholic lay women in replacing women religious if they were forced to flee parts of Europe. Some of those who became lay teachers used their study and experience of religion gained with the sisters in their parishes. One sister writing of the student boarders in Milan noted that some 'gave

¹⁴ Nash, 'A Means of Honourable Support'.

¹⁵ Letter from Cabrini to Eliza Allen Starr, 7th February 1900, the Ellen Gates Starr Papers, Series II. Family Correspondence, Family: Eliza Allen Starr, Friends and Associates, Cabrini, M. Frances Xavier, 1900, Smith College Archives.

¹⁶ Hull-House was a secular social settlement house in Chicago.

¹⁷ Nash, 'A Means of Honourable Support'.

¹⁸ 'Brevi Cenni Riguardanti L'Apertura della Casa in Milano e delle Opera Che in Essa Compiano', 'Memorie', AG.

valuable aid to parish priests by teaching Christian Doctrine in schools and in church'.¹⁹ Helena Dawes has shown the significant role of Catholic women's movements in Italy in the years after Cabrini's death.²⁰ Similarly Mary Newman has shown the role of Catholic lay women in England in her work on the Catholic Women's League.²¹

Physical education is only referred to as a subject in London from 1910. Gymnastics was part of the *patente* examination sat by the students from Codogno in 1882, so some Italian sisters would have been qualified to teach it. Inclusion of gymnastics in the *academie* in New Orleans, but not in London and Rome, appears to have been a response to the needs of male pupils there. Lack of facilities also restricted provision in Europe and the United States. This changed in the global period. Free and fee-paying schools in Sao Paulo (1908), Rio de Janeiro (1908), Buenos Aires (1901) and Noisy le Grande (1914), like Honor Oak, London and Esplanade, New Orleans had extensive grounds.

There was little science teaching in this period. Photographs in the 1930 Golden Jubilee publication include laboratories for physics and natural science in Rome and one for chemistry in Denver as well as Seattle. There was also a well-equipped domestic science room in Seattle.²² These facilities appear to date from the twelve years following Cabrini's death. The earlier lack of provision may have been due to lack of resources, parental demand and government requirements rather than Cabrini excluding it. Sisters with the *patente* would have been examined in

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Dawes, *Catholic Women's Movements*.

²¹ Newman, M.V. (2010) *The Educational Work of the Catholic Women's League*.

²² MSC, *Cinquanti Anni*, 58-9, 78, 83, 80.

physical sciences. Some subjects may not have been recorded due to the practice of integrating them. This was the case in New Orleans where the history, geography and physical science of Italy were used as content to teach Italian language skills. There is no reference to classics.

8. 2 Effective teaching of subject disciplines

Cabrini's recruitment of teachers with the *patente* and the examples of ongoing pedagogical education evident in the case studies indicate the importance of effective subject teaching. There are also a number of examples of subject specific approaches. The content, teaching and assessment of subjects are considered in relation to provision in schools, the community and in the education and formation of sisters. The integration of religious content is considered as subjects are examined as are the material resources needed to teach them. Religious and moral education as a discrete discipline is dealt with last. This is followed by consideration of the invisible pedagogy contributing to effective teaching in all subjects.

Languages

Language provision included the national language, Italian as a heritage language and English as an additional language for migrants. Foreign languages were taught in the fee-paying schools, the *Magistero* programme and in the education and formation of sisters. French was the first foreign language. Other foreign languages offered as 'Extras' depended on the availability of native speaker sisters, as in Rome and London, and on local demand. The minority of pupils in the free schools in the United States who were not Italian had an unusual opportunity to

learn a foreign language. Italian was considered the migrants' heritage language. The majority of the pupils in the schools in the United States, however, were from southern Italy or Sicily, as in New Orleans. It was in some ways another additional language for them and the schools tri-lingual rather than bi-lingual. The international school in London was multi-lingual.

Cabrini was not a linguist, joking that she knew enough English 'not to die of hunger or get lost'.²³ Her clear understanding of how languages should be learnt is evident in the case studies and in her letters advising sisters elsewhere. Textbooks were used and grammar taught, developing cognitive skills. When Sister Gabriella Linati was learning Spanish in 1894 Cabrini advised that, the 'grammar which seems simple at first is not really so'.²⁴ She also highlighted the need for attention to the minute details of spelling. In 1895 she sent for Spanish-Italian grammar books for the Panama school. Translation, a feature of Italian teaching in New Orleans, may well have been used throughout the Institute. Michele Milan has suggested that it was common practice in the schools of the French congregations in Ireland in the nineteenth century.²⁵ Conversation was also important. Cabrini considered the ability to speak a language well an ornamental competence. In 1914, at the Assumption School in Chicago, she awarded a prize for the recitation in English or Italian that 'she judged to be "the most beautiful language"'.²⁶ She therefore always sought to have native speakers teaching languages. The Sisters sent on 'reverse

²³ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 161.

²⁴ *Epistolario* 2, December 5, 1894, 456.

²⁵ Michele Milan, 'A Path to Perfection: translations from French by Catholic women religious in nineteenth-century Ireland' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious*, eds. Raftery and Smyth, 199-214.

²⁶ Celeste E Raspanti, 'Our Friend Mother Cabrini' in *The Catholic Digest*, November 1992. CR.

mission' from the United States, Latin America and France to Rome for this purpose followed a trend dating from August 1890. In that year Cabrini took the first two English-speaking postulants who entered in New York, Elizabeth Desmond and Mary Nolan, to Codogno to teach English.²⁷ The demand for native teachers of foreign languages increased in 1892 with the move into Latin America. In 1895 Cabrini requested that a circular be produced for distribution in French, Spanish, German and English speaking countries to recruit native speakers of those languages.²⁸ Employing lay teachers, as in New Orleans had an impact on the restricted budgets of foundations.

Intense regular study was also a feature. In 1899 Cabrini wrote that Mothers Carolina, Geltrude and others 'should study English for two hours a day with Mother Estella and practice speaking'.²⁹ In 1903 she sent 'the English sister' to Madrid to teach Mother Filomena Maria Ajani to speak and write well in English two months before her arrival in London.³⁰ Cabrini's belief in experience in the country where the language was spoken was seen in the publicity for the London International School. Similarly, on establishing the Paris house in 1898, she had asked Mother Maddalena Savaré in Codogno to make it known that 'young ladies who wish to perfect their French language skills can come to our house in Paris'.³¹ In 1902 Sister Albertina was asked to stop in Paris and London on

²⁷ Mary died shortly after her arrival there but Elizabeth, as Mother Stanislao, taught English to pupils and sisters there for the rest of her life.

²⁸ *Epistolario* 2, July 24, 1895.

²⁹ *Epistolario* 3, May 9th, 1899, 289.

³⁰ *Epistolario* 4, January 12, 1903, 103.

³¹ *Epistolario* 3, September 11, 1898, 174.

route from Italy to the United States to brush up her French and then her English.³²

The national language formed part of both internal and external examinations. Italian language teaching abroad was subject to additional scrutiny through the visits of inspectors from the Italian Consulate who provided funding. Language ability was also assessed when pupils performed in the *academie*.

Mathematics

Arithmetic was taught and examined in all the schools and important for progression but there is little reference to the content or how it was taught in the case study schools or elsewhere. More advanced Mathematics was also taught as it was required for the *patente* and other higher level external examinations such as the Oxford Highers in England. In 1882 Cabrini wrote of bringing resources on logarithms from Treviglio for the mathematics teacher in Codogno.³³ She saw mathematics providing an opportunity, not only to develop cognitive competences, but also to teach religion. De Maria observes that Cabrini was convinced that ‘a missionary sister can draw holy reflections from every lesson, whatever the theme or discussion even mathematics’.³⁴

The Visual Arts

Needlecraft skills were important ornamental competences taught in all the schools and in the community provision. Examples of good practice to

³² *Epistolario* 4, July 8, 1902, 3.

³³ *Epistolario* 1, July 15th 1882, 57.

³⁴ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 238.

inspire pupils were central to the teaching and included embroidered cloths in the convent chapels. Exhibitions of embroidery, like that visited by the inspector in Rome in 1899, also served as a means of external assessment. In 1906 samples of needlecraft from MSC schools around the world were on show at their stand at the Milan Exhibition. They caught the attention of Queen Margherita, who 'minutely examined the marvels of the beautiful and varied needlecraft'.³⁵ The MSC experience of high standards may explain why the sisters in New Orleans believed that they could improve on the work they exhibited at the Winter School in 1899.

Fine art was important in the fee-paying schools. The only sample of art work identified for the three case studies was the calligraphy of the 1910 London play script. This was typical as calligraphy was, along with decorated letters, an important feature of the MSC art curriculum from the outset. It was part of the *patente* examinations. Cabrini described the decorated letter exam tasks which students from Codogno sat in 1882. Cecchina drew 'the letter "M" with a floral border in which Marguerite daisies predominated' whilst Enrichetta and Teresina, drew five vine leaves and a bunch of grapes.³⁶ These kinds of decorations were used in greetings sent to the sisters in Milan by pupils and alumnae for the 1910 Silver Jubilee of the school and by sisters to Cabrini.³⁷ Examples are shown in images 3 and 4 on pages 331-2. Image 3 is a decorated greeting sent to the sisters in Milan by Teresa Confalonieri, a 'grateful and affectionate' alumna.

³⁵ *Epistolario* 4, June 27, 1906, 499.

³⁶ *Epistolario* 1, July 18th, 1882, 57-59.

³⁷ Barbagallo MSC, *Una Scuola che Educa li Cuore* ; Canale and Tagliabue eds., *La Stella Del Mattino*.

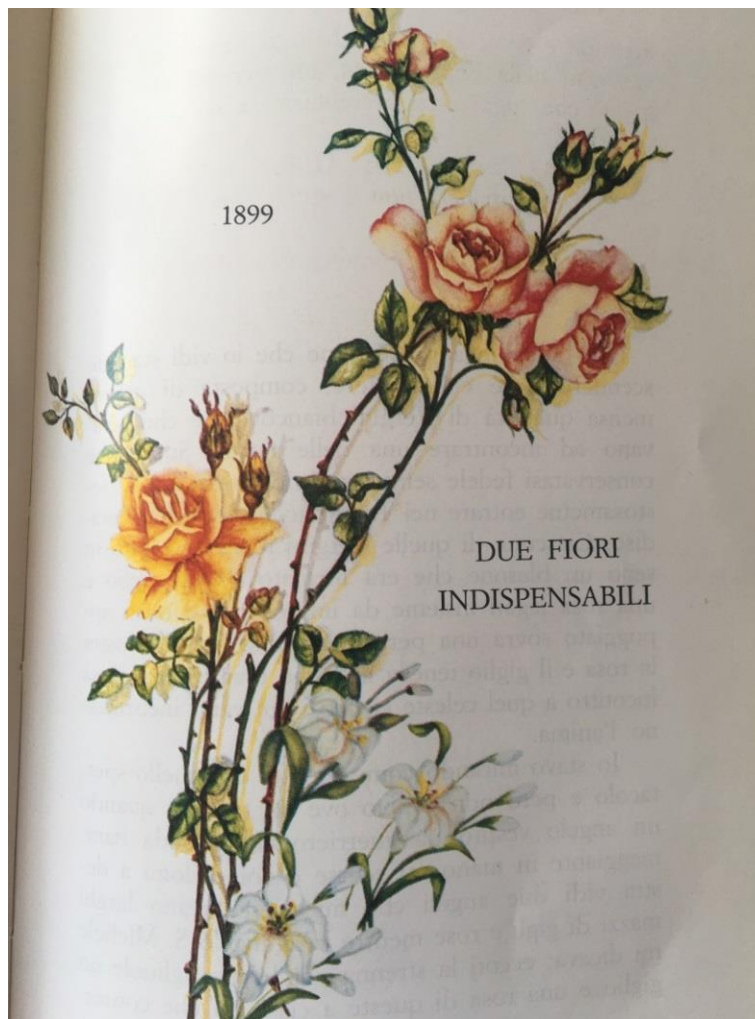
Image 3: 'To the Beloved Institute'



Source: *Una Scuola che Educa li Cuore e la Ragione* (Melegano: Edizione Gemini Grafica, 2009), 61.

Image 4 is a decorated greeting depicting roses and lilies, symbols of love and purity respectively. These were considered two indispensable virtues of the Missionary Sister. It is from an unnamed sister to Cabrini

Image 4: 'Two Indispensable Flowers'



Source: Maria Regina Canale MSC ed., *La Stella Del Mattino*, (Rome: L'Istituto Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù, 1987), 79.

Again, examples of good practice were important. Cabrini would ask for artwork to be brought for a new school, as she did in 1902 in London. In Panama in 1895, she requested oil paintings. The offer was also dependent on sisters' skills. The sculpture offered in Rome has not been identified elsewhere. Religious celebrations provided opportunities for pupils and sodality members to demonstrate their ornamental skills and for others to assess them. In Milan in May 1897 pupils decorated the

chapel for May using their own means. This motivated the pupils, to the delight of the hard working teachers. The secretary noted that:

It was beautiful to see the care taken by our students in adorning their little chapel with flowers, drapes in various colours, lace and ribbons; all fruit of their own small savings and then with what zeal they prepared and hung the flower buds. Truly the teachers would not be tired if the whole school year was like the month of May.³⁸

Religious education was integrated into the provision for the visual arts in a number of ways. Sisters explained religious topics whilst the girls and young women from the local community were sewing and when girls and women made decorations for the chapel during festive oratories.

The Performing Arts

Performing arts were important in all three case studies. Throughout the Institute pupils, students and sodality members had opportunities for singing, playing musical instruments, acting and reciting poetry in public. *Academie* were held at the end of the school year, for sodality patronal feasts and to mark religious and civic celebrations. A large space for performance was regarded as essential when purchasing property.³⁹

Recitals of Dante's poetry were popular items in Italy and abroad. The pupil of the Assumption School in Chicago, who won the 'beautiful language' prize in 1914, recited Dante.⁴⁰ Pupils singing in local churches in the three studies continued a tradition established in the earliest days of the Institute. The House Annals for Grumello record that the children 'sang motets with such fervour', in the parish church on 1st June 1883.⁴¹

³⁸ 'Memorie Istituto Salesiane Missionarie Sacro Cuore Milano 29 Settembre 1884 – Fu questo il giorno', 81. Memorie, AG.

³⁹ MSC, *Cinquant'Anni di vita*, 82.

⁴⁰ Celeste E Raspanti, 'Our Friend Mother Cabrini'.

⁴¹ 'Grumello, Prima Fondazione Dopo La Culla dell'Istituto, 21 Novembre 1882' in 'Memorie o Relazione delle Prime Case dell'Istituto', LA.

Secular songs were also taught. When planning to set up a school in Argentina in 1895, Cabrini asked Mother Gesuina Diotti in Rome to send songs for both 'Church and civil festivals'.⁴² In 1899 she wrote from Madrid to request Italian music for church and festivals. It was in demand and the Queen particularly liked it.⁴³ The instruments taught in London and Latin America included the violin, harp and piano.

The schools in all three studies provided the opportunity to observe examples of good practice to encourage pupils to aspire to high standards. These included visiting performers and outings to local religious and civic events, as well as observing the sisters. De Maria points out that Cabrini recommended that 'Gregorian chant and choral music be sung with gravity and devotion in the convent chapels'.⁴⁴ This was before Pius X had issued a *Motu Proprio* recommending the practice. The sisters' expertise in developing pupils' performance skills is evident in preparing pupils for a public performance in London in less than a month in 1902. This was also demonstrated later that year in Denver. 'The children worked for a whole week with all their might' to prepare a performance for the inauguration of that new school.⁴⁵ Cabrini observed that the pupils 'lined up in an orderly way to the sound of a march and with a discipline comparable to that of our long-established schools'.⁴⁶ The play on virtue in London in 1910, which used drama as a vehicle for moral education, was not unusual. In Milan in 1902 pupils participated in morality plays as part of a

⁴² *Epistolario* 2, September 1885, 558.

⁴³ *Epistolario* 3, October 1899, 356.

⁴⁴ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 237.

⁴⁵ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 486-7.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 487.

carnival for Shrove Tuesday.⁴⁷ De Maria also noted that performing arts were important in moral formation because they made children happy. Cabrini believed that children were more likely to be good if they developed a happy disposition.⁴⁸ Michal Vojtáš has shown that her contemporary, Don Bosco, also made happiness a priority. A 'pedagogy of joy and festivals' was key to his 'preventative system'.⁴⁹

A minority of students sat external assessments in music, as was the case with girls taking Royal College of Music examinations in London. Singing was an option in the *Patente* examination. It was taken by Teresina and Enrichetta, two students from Codogno, in Treviglio in 1882.⁵⁰ Some student boarders in Milan studied for the Diploma in Music at the prestigious Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory.⁵¹ Public performances, however, served as a means of external assessment for the majority of pupils. This was not only by families but also by benefactors and representatives of Church and secular authorities. In Buenos Aires the wife of the President of Argentina attended the *academia* held for the inauguration of Collegio di Santa Rosa in 1896.⁵² Music 'Extras', in particular demand in Latin America, provided income, as they did in London and Rome. Sisters who were able to play an instrument were given opportunities to learn to play additional ones because of the demand. In 1890 Mother Stephanina

⁴⁷ *Epistolario* 4, February 12th, 1902.

⁴⁸ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 238.

⁴⁹ See for example, Michal Vojtáš, 2018, '8 Itinerari educativi: Pedagogia della gioia e della festa' available: https://www.academia.edu/36578524/8_Itinerari_educativi_Pedagogia_della_gioia_e_della_festa (accessed 12/05/2018).

⁵⁰ *Epistolario* 1, July 18, 1882, 59.

⁵¹ Brevi Cenni Riguardanti L'Apertura della Casa in Milano e delle Opera Che in Essa Compiano, Memorie, AG.

⁵² Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 334.

Crivelli, who was teaching French and piano in Rome, was having lessons to learn to play the harmonium.⁵³

Physical Education and Recreation

De Maria quoted the proverb, '*mens sans in corpore sano*', to refer to Cabrini's belief in a balance of mind and body. Once suitable grounds were acquired team sports included hockey and cricket as well as the tennis, basketball and croquet listed for London.⁵⁴ Outdoor activities were also part of festive oratories and sodality meetings. In New Orleans Josephine Cangelosi and her friends in the Daughters of Mary played skipping in the courtyard.⁵⁵ Visits to holiday homes were important for orphans and boarders. Long walks featured even if, as in Nicaragua, they required being driven to the open countryside. At the time anti-clerical feeling made walks in Granada unsafe.⁵⁶ Outings to participate in local religious and civic events featured in Rome, New Orleans and London. Sisters and pupils did not, however, participate in the popular 20th September parades to mark the fall of Rome in 1870, in Italy or the United States.

Science

Science as a discrete subject only appeared on the school curriculum in London from 1910. Informal health and hygiene education was given on home visits in New Orleans. In New York in 1895 Cabrini sent sisters to

⁵³ *Epistolario* 1, July 16, 1890.

⁵⁴ MSC, *Cinquat'Anni di Vita*; De Maria, 237-8.

⁵⁵ Florence L Herman, 'Mrs. Josephine Cangelosi.

⁵⁶ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 136-7.

study pharmacy.⁵⁷ They were to run the dispensary in the expanded New York Columbus Hospital. Natural science formed a significant part of the informal education for sisters and the wider community in the Travel Letters. Cabrini provides detailed colourful descriptions to capture the imagination. Her 1906 description of the Petrified Forest in the Grand Canyon in Arizona is typical:

Here we find lying on the ground or springing up from the sands innumerable trunks of petrified trees of different dimensions, some of them extending to ten feet in diameter. They seem to have been pines or cedars. Water has gradually filled up the cells with flints, manganese and oxide of iron mixed with other substances, which have given them beautiful tints which elicit the admiration of the traveller. Under the action of the heat or cold these trunks have become fractured.⁵⁸

Cabrini also understood scientific research to be part of a Catholic tradition of science. In a travel letter of 1906, she wrote of the work of Luther Burbank, the botanist, horticulturist and pioneer in agricultural science. She explained that his work had been informed by the research of an Austrian Augustinian monk, half a century earlier.⁵⁹

History and Geography

History and Geography are mentioned only in London after 1910 and as subject matter for the teaching of the Italian language in New Orleans. Cabrini did not refer to them as curriculum subjects in schools or as part of the 1882 *patente* examinations. Her own 1868 *patente* certificate, however, records that she gained distinctions in both. In 1900 she recalled that they were her favourite subjects as a child.⁶⁰ Her Travel Letters provide enthusiastic input on both subjects, with descriptions of the

⁵⁷ *Epistolario* 2, May 20, 1895, 516.

⁵⁸ Cipolla ed., *Tra un'onda*, 548-9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 553.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 440.

physical and human geography of places she visited and accounts of their histories. Cabrini used Catholic cultural history, to demonstrate the progressive tradition of health care in the Catholic Church. She saw the work of the MSC as part of that tradition. Her account of the opening of the Columbus Hospital in Chicago in 1905 identified the roots of modern healthcare in the Italian Catholic Church. She wrote:

Before the coming of Christianity there is no record of the existence of institutions, expressions of the highest fraternal charity, like our modern hospitals.⁶¹

She went on to point out that the first record of a hospital was in Rome. She also referred to the role of monasteries in health and social care in England throughout the Middle Ages.

Religious and Moral Education

In the 1881 Rule Cabrini wrote of ‘forming the heart to the love of religion and practice of virtue’, through the development of cognitive and ornamental competences. Reports to the Holy See refer to teaching Christian Doctrine in schools and in the community. Religious education also formed an important part of the ongoing education and formation of sisters. The case studies identify opportunities to develop the three elements of religion identified by Von Hugel: the institutional, the intellectual and the mystical.⁶²

There were many opportunities to develop the ‘institutional’ element, encompassing ‘facts’ apprehended through the sense impressions and memories. The Rule gave guidance on teaching ‘Christian doctrine’ in

⁶¹ Ibid., 528.

⁶² Von Hugel, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, 51-3.

parishes. Cabrini advised that sisters 'preferably use the Catechism of the Diocese where they have one'.⁶³ In 1906 she recommended it for Italian migrants with no knowledge of their Catholic faith writing that 'in a brief format it contains the most high doctrines of our faith.'⁶⁴ No reference has been found to indicate how the catechism was used. Overtly religious practices included the use of religious images, such as pictures and statues, as well as participative, devotional experiences. The first artefact acquired for a foundation was a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This presented Christ with his heart visible as a visual reminder of his love for each person. Images of Mary, Saint Joseph and angels were also common throughout the Institute. When preparing to set up schools in Argentina in September 1895, Cabrini wrote to Agostina Chiodini, the Provincial Superior of the United States, requesting statues to put in all convent rooms, the school and the dormitories.⁶⁵ Images requested included Saints John Berchmans, Aloysius, Anthony, Thomas Aquinas, Michael and the Guardian angels. The local Saint, Rose of Lima, soon joined their number. The use of pictures of Christ and the saints as presents and prizes in New Orleans was common practice in MSC education. The pupil who won the prize for reciting Dante at the Assumption School in Chicago in 1914 was awarded 'A Holy picture of the Blessed Virgin of the Assumption.'⁶⁶

In Rome, New Orleans and London colourful, participative devotional experiences impacted on all the senses. Blessed Sacrament and May processions were the highlights. Pupils wore their best clothes. Recent

⁶³ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 28.

⁶⁴ Cipolla ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 561.

⁶⁵ *Epistolario* 2, September 23, 1895, 554.

⁶⁶ Celeste E Raspanti, 'Our Friend Mother Cabrini'.

first communicants wore the clothes from that occasion. Family members and the wider community joined these celebrations making them more memorable. Overall there is a sense that Cabrini and her sisters wanted to convey the beauty of religion and were aided in this by their own and the pupils' ornamental competences. The use of symbolism to convey religious meanings, developing the memory and imagination is evident in the use of beautiful flowers to represent virtues in the London play of 1910. This technique is evident 22 years earlier. Placing flowers before images of Mary, the mother of Christ, during the month of May was a Catholic custom. Cabrini advised sisters to 'cultivate the mystical garden of your soul'. She suggested they present virtues to Mary during May, as symbolic flowers.⁶⁷ She wrote 'you are intelligent enough and know well how to appropriate the qualities of the virtues to flowers and vice versa.'⁶⁸ Their symbolic use is also evident in the drawings sent to Cabrini by the sisters, for example, the one shown in Image 4 on page 332.⁶⁹

The message of a greeting card sent to the Milan school for the Silver Jubilee in 1910 by Pia Bellingou, an alumna, remembered 'the splendid harmony of beauty and truth' in her education:

It remains forever
The Noble College
Radiating candid light
Diffusing
Splendid harmony of truth and beauty
That educates young women's minds
To the vigorous ascent of virtue and thought⁷⁰

⁶⁷ *Epistolario*, 1, April 24, 1888, 308-9.

⁶⁸ *Epistolario*, 1, April 24, 1888, 308-9.

⁶⁹ See Canale and Tagliabue eds., *La Stella Del Mattino*.

⁷⁰ Barbagallo, *Una Scuola che Educa li Cuore*, 55.

There are no references in the sources used for the case studies to sisters explaining the faith in school classes, in what Von Hugel terms an 'intellectual' or more systematic philosophical way. 'Elements of Christian Philosophy' is, however, listed on the curriculum for the London schools in 1910 and 1914. Cabrini had specified in the Rule that sisters should 'prepare themselves to speak of the truths of the faith not just with the 'required exactness' but also with 'effect and effectiveness'.⁷¹ Reasoned explanations are evident in Cabrini's letters to individuals and her published Travel Letters. More examples are found in her input during visits recorded in house annals. Numerous scripture references contributed the 'required exactness'. Particular attention was given to topics related to 'the love of religion and practice of virtue', demonstrating the connection between the two. Use of symbolism gave 'effect and effectiveness'. The image of a 'volcano of love', used in the letter to *Magistero* students, was typical. Cabrini used it to describe the impact of the synthesis of emotion and intellect in a missionary sister. Cabrini also used this image in a Travel Letter of 1896 when describing a conversation with a Neapolitan literary man. He argued that to be religious required suppressing his emotions:

One day he wished to assert that in order to convert he would have to suppress and extinguish the ardour of his spirit and the vehemence of his human passions would be reduced to frosty mountain of ice.⁷²

Cabrini explained that the grace resulting from a personal relationship with God was transforming, rather than suppressing. She wrote that his passions would be 'transformed into celestial flames by grace and the supernatural light of heaven growing until they

⁷¹ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 28.

⁷² *Tra un'onda*, 1896, 343.

became a volcano of love of God'.⁷³ She went on to identify Mary Magdalen and Augustine of Hippo as models of this transformation. These stories presented the arguments to the wider religious and secular readership of these public letters. They also provided models of respectful, reasoned dialogue in missionary activity for sisters and teaching students. She also mentioned that when the Neapolitan 'crossed the line' in discussions during dinner, she sat in silence for a moment and then 'with kindness and firmness as best I can, I explain the truth'.⁷⁴

Retreats and religious conferences gave opportunities for deepening of intellectual understanding. They were listed as a work in the 1881 Rule and referred to in reports to the Holy See. They were held for pupils, young men and women and older women from the community as well as sisters. It is evident that in Rome and New Orleans they became an important part of preparation for First Holy Communion. De Maria listed six eminent prelates, three monsignors and three well known Jesuits who often gave the retreats in Italy, with the 'effect and effectiveness' referred to by Cabrini. De Maria observed that they 'dedicated themselves with love and zeal to the religious education of their pupils'.⁷⁵ This may explain why the voluntary retreats and conferences for young men and women, like those in Rome, were well attended. A sister recalled 100 participants for many offered in Milan.⁷⁶ It was similar in the smaller towns in Italy.

⁷³ Ibid., 343.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 342.

⁷⁵ Una dell sue Figlie, La Madre, 236.

⁷⁶ 'Brevi Cenni Riguardanti L'Apertura della Casa in Milano e delle Opera Che in Essa Compiano', Memorie, AG.

House annals, such as those of Casapusterlengo for 1893, recording ‘a good number’ of the teenagers attending day retreats.⁷⁷

The retreats also gave opportunities to understand the mystical element of religion and develop a closer relationship with God. The Spiritual Exercises fostered interior experiences and feelings in meditating on the life of Christ, for example his suffering and death to redeem each person. Cabrini and the sisters understood receipt of the sacraments and time spent in prayer and meditation as a means to receive the grace of God, which Cabrini referred to in conversation with the Neapolitan man. A sister explains this in a record of retreat for student boarders and sisters in Milan on 13 May 1886. Monsignor Bersani from Lodi gave the retreat from 9.00 until 12.00 and highlighted the role of the sacraments and prayer as a means to union with Christ:

He exhorted them to love Jesus, who would be found in prayer and in the intimate union with him by means of the Eucharist, in purity of spirit and in noble frankness as his followers.⁷⁸

It is clear from the case studies that the sisters devoted much time and energy to providing retreats, as well as preparing candidates for confirmation and Holy Communion. This reflects the situation globally. The 1907 report to the Holy See records an annual total of 4,495 candidates prepared for First Holy Communion in the Institute globally.⁷⁹ Pupils also experienced the mystical by observing Cabrini and the sisters at prayer. This was evident when Cabrini knelt with the children making their

⁷⁷ ‘Resoconto Dell’Operate delle Salesiane Missionarie del S.C. di Gesu in Casapusterlengo nel 1893’ in , ‘Memorie o Relazione delle Prime Case dell’Istituto’, 14.

⁷⁸ ‘Memorie Istituto Salesiane Missionarie Sacro Cuore Milano 29 Settembre 1884 – Fu questo il giorno’, AG, 11.

⁷⁹ ‘Relazione 1907’, 15.

first communion in London. Professor Rita Federico was a Magistero student who lived with the sisters for four years. In her 1918 letter of condolence she remembered seeing Cabrini at prayer when passing the chapel. Cabrini's look of contemplation inspired her.⁸⁰ Mother Josephine Pomini, an alumna of West Park orphanage, remembered seeing Cabrini receive 'Holy Communion with so much fervour'.⁸¹

The schools also had altars and grottos which provided spaces for contemplation and reminders of divine friendship. The sisters remembered Cabrini stopping at the one in Brockley:

Mother would pause in a familiar way with the Heart of Jesus every time she had to go out, to Him she recommended all that she was going to deal with and in Him she placed all her confidence.⁸²

Later in Honor Oak, sisters and pupils would stop in front of the large statue of the Sacred Heart in front of Woodville Hall. The secretary noted in the Annals that they couldn't pass it without stopping for a moment of contemplation.⁸³ The pupils did so too and the Protestants looked on it with respect and devotion. Von Hugel writes of the 'mystical' element of religion which is felt. This is then 'loved and lived', rather than seen or reasoned. Cabrini emphasised this in her guidance for retreats. It is clear that she also saw the need to use reason to reflect on the mystical experience for it to lead to action. She wrote, 'If you want to pluck fruit from the Exercises it is important that you exercise your memory, your

⁸⁰ MSC, *In Memoria*, 202.

⁸¹ 'Memorie of Mother M Josephine Pomini'.

⁸² AL, C.

⁸³ MF, 265.

intellect and your will'.⁸⁴ She also recognised that the immediate impact might fade during the year between the annual Spiritual exercises. She addressed this in two practical ways. The first was day retreats during the year, evident in the case studies. Cabrini hoped these would assist the sisters 'to further rekindle in themselves in the practice of good'.⁸⁵ The second was to keep a little book of resolutions to 'serve as a reminder in order to keep the spirit alive in practising them.'⁸⁶ Cabrini's note, referred to in the London study, on the need to practice the charity she had seen in Christ, came from her own notebook. The sisters' freedom to choose their own resolutions is emphasised. The Rule refers to 'general and specific resolutions according to their own needs'.⁸⁷

The institutional, intellectual and mystical elements of religion all contributed to developing a personal relationship with God. Cabrini and her sisters understood this as a key means for each person to develop virtuous dispositions. This moral education linked the spiritual and the moral. It was based on the belief that use of the intellect alone would not result in good actions. Nicholas Lombardo in his study of Aquinas and the emotions points out that a 'try harder' approach that only appeals to the will is bound to fail as it seeks 'to fulfil Christ's commands without integrating their emotions or relying on God's grace.'⁸⁸ Following unification moral education was promoted as a civilising influence in Italy. Silvana Patriaca makes the point with reference to the well-known term 'making Italians' found in contemporary discourse. This was not a

⁸⁴ MSC ed., *Riforme per Giorni di Santo Ritiro Suggerite dalla Ven. Madre Francesca Cabrini*. (Rome: MSC, 1911) 208.

⁸⁵ 'Regole dell'Istituto', 2: 'Costituzioni 1907', 14.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 15.

⁸⁸ Nicholas Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 256.

reference to promoting a common 'Italianess' among citizens. It was rather a concern about the Italian character and vices such as laziness. The poor were in need of civilising. Moral education was seen as a means to 're-shape moral and civic attitudes and behaviour of regenerating them to make them worthy members of the new patria.'⁸⁹ The provision in Italy under the Coppino Law removed religion from moral education.

The issues are evident in 1882 in letters written by Cabrini at the exam centre in Treviglio. She wrote about a discussion with the director of the examination centre. He 'wants us to say: morals rights and responsibilities'.⁹⁰ Cabrini however, referred to 'Morals and Rights and Responsibilities', using capital letters to indicate that morality is God given. In 1884, the Milan house annals noted that this distinguished them from the public schools. The secretary wrote that 'in the public school they are not educated to be virtuous but are undermined with instruction that does not comply with religious principles'.⁹¹ In the early twentieth century Cabrini wrote of this in her Travel Letters with reference to Italian migrants in the United States.⁹² She believed that her approach to educating good Christians would at the same time educate good citizens. Developing virtues such as honesty, justice and charity would contribute both to their personal growth and the common good. In this sense the educational practice can be described as social-reconstructionist. Cabrini wrote in her aim that 'The teaching will be adjusted to meet the needs of

⁸⁹ Patriaca, *Italian Vices*, 52.

⁹⁰ *Epistolario* 1, July, 1882, 61.

⁹¹ 'Memorie Istituto Salesiane Missionarie Sacro Cuore Milano 29 Settembre 1884 – Fu questo il giorno', AG, 8.

⁹² Cipolla ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 493.

those being taught'.⁹³ This child-centred approach was particularly important with regard to the character education and the virtues. She advised sisters to study the needs of individuals in the 1907 constitutions:

Study well the characters, the capacities and strengths of the pupils because you cannot assume that they are all the same rather they will vary according to their capacities and the gifts they have received from God.⁹⁴

The pupils' natural inclination to the virtues needed to be cultivated:

Watch the beginnings of the passions and the natural inclinations to the virtues, being ready to moderate the former and cultivate the latter, convinced that, that which is maintained in a small way in girls whether good or bad grows with time.⁹⁵

This approach is in keeping with the 'morality of happiness' tradition described by Pinckaers. It relied on the invisible pedagogy of relationships as much as knowledge and understanding. The sisters needed to develop the virtues themselves to use an invisible pedagogy appropriate to a Missionary of the Sacred Heart. This explains the importance of having a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the convent. They believed that Christ was present in the consecrated host. Similarly a good chaplain confessor, even if costly, was essential to support them in their spiritual life.

Invisible pedagogy

All three case studies provide examples of the importance of invisible pedagogy to effective teaching in MSC schools. Cabrini believed that impressions, emotions and attitudes affected the pupils' capacity to learn

⁹³ 'Regola dell'Istituto', 25.

⁹⁴ 'Costituzioni dell'Istituto 1907', 37.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

and grow in virtue. The relational aspect of teaching, highlighted by Nel Noddings, was, therefore, as important as the teacher's subject knowledge, technical skills and resources.⁹⁶ The approach was documented in the 1913 job description for teachers which advises, 'resist correcting impatiently, remembering that corrections made badly or inopportunistically, harm young people instead'.⁹⁷ The sisters' commitment to this approach is evident in their reaction to the harsh approach of the inspector in Rome. It is similar to that of Cornelia Connelly described by Marmion. He makes reference to Connelly's wish to focus on 'honour' rather than 'shame' in moral education.⁹⁸

The case studies demonstrate that the virtue of loving care was central to MSC invisible pedagogy. In her Travel Letters Cabrini exhorted the sisters to demonstrate positive emotions in their work. In 1894 she wrote 'Today is the time for love not to remain hidden but to be live and true.'⁹⁹ In 1899 she called on them to 'work with ardour and love in effervescence will enable you to work with strength and splendour'.¹⁰⁰ Cabrini wanted sisters to demonstrate that they were indeed 'inflamed' with the love of the heart of Christ by mirroring his attitudes in their attitudes to pupils. This was not sentimental. She showed her disapproval of sentimentality in the 1907 Constitutions. She wrote of 'true charity, patient, gentle, affable without sopiness'.¹⁰¹ Her references to love are not sentimental as they are directed at the positive outcome of the pupils' learning and personal growth. Loving care in teaching pupils was directed at helping them to

⁹⁶ Noddings, 'Is Teaching a Practice?' in *Education and Practice*, eds., Dunne and Hogan, 159-169.

⁹⁷ 'Maestre', 'Uffici', AG.

⁹⁸ Marmion, 'Cornelia Connelly's Work in Education', 165.

⁹⁹ Cipolla, *Tra Un'onda*, 152.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 398.

¹⁰¹ 'Costituzioni dell'Istituto 1907', 15.

learn. It was a practical way to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She hoped that pupils would grow in the virtue of loving care, as well as the good of the subject discipline. She explained that they in their turn would use this approach in teaching, as a professional or in the family and the workplace writing, 'is it not true that our pupils will in turn become a teacher and teach more effectively'.¹⁰²

Firmness and gentleness, to which Cabrini had referred in the original Rule, are evident in the case studies. This is both in relations between sisters and pupils and between superiors and sisters. Mother Josephine Pomini remembered in 1918 that Cabrini modelled this, writing, 'she was firm in what she wanted from her daughters.'¹⁰³ She would also 'reprimand me in a motherly way'.¹⁰⁴ In working with orphans, adult migrants and student boarders the sisters were indeed taking the place of mothers. The motherly approach was about more than being a mother substitute. It was about accompaniment rather than distance in relationships. De Maria wrote of 'no haughtiness':

mothers were what she wanted the sisters to be to the pupils-with no haughtiness..... No sharp words, no humiliating punishments would she tolerate; but insisted that with firm and gentle reasoning, the educator could achieve her goal.¹⁰⁵

The motherly approach promoted solidarity in the convent, the school and the community. A sister who arrived in New Orleans 1892 wrote that the local Italians migrants were 'proud to have their sisters'.¹⁰⁶ Mother Domenica's frankness about her initial reaction to the 'ugly mugs' suggests

¹⁰² Cipolla ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 547.

¹⁰³ 'Memorie of Mother M Josephine Pomini', 2.

¹⁰⁴ 'Memorie of Mother M Josephine Pomini', 4.

¹⁰⁵ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 237.

¹⁰⁶ M3, 4.

that it was a challenge. She wrote that Cabrini's friendly approach was attractive to watch. This has parallels with use of examples of good practice in the ornamental subjects. The beauty evident encouraged pupils and sisters to strive for high moral standards. Similarly the expressive language of 'joy' and 'delight' of the annals makes the relational pedagogy attractive. Mother Josephine Pomini also wrote of Cabrini that 'it was her delight to be with us'.¹⁰⁷

The motherly care for individuals is particularly evident in the adjustments for new orphans in the New Orleans case study. There are few references to individuals in sources for London and Rome. Cabrini's commitment to subsidiarity, lack of detailed proscription and obligations relied on sisters having practical wisdom or the virtue of prudence in managing the classroom and the convent. The only references to problems in the classroom are in dealing with the boys in New Orleans. The teacher education and the novitiate experience may have supported the ability of the teaching sisters to use this practical wisdom. The larger classes may have been more challenging. The sister in New Orleans referred to this in relation to the large classes in the Cathedral schools.

There is more reference to relationships between superiors and sisters. It is clear in the case studies that at times superiors found it a challenge to be firm and gentle mothers to the sisters in their care, modelling the relationship expected in the schools. The superiors may have been less well prepared. They may also have not been able to sustain the virtuous practice. In Panama in 1895 Cabrini sent the superior Italian Mother

¹⁰⁷ 'Memorie of Mother M Josephine Pomini', 2.

Cherubina Ciceri to New York.¹⁰⁸ Until that point she appears to have been a model of virtue. She worked in Milan, was founding superior in Nicaragua, led the sisters out of Nicaragua and was setting up the house in Panama. Cabrini wrote that she had 'lost the spirit and the love of the Institute'.¹⁰⁹ Maybe Mother Cherubina, like Mother Agostina in London, needed a break from responsibility. It appears to have worked for her as it did for Mother Agostina. A year later in 1896 she was working to set up the new foundation in Buenos Aires.

8. 3 Strategies to Support Access to Education

By establishing a global network of schools and other educational provision Cabrini and her sisters gave many people access to education. Her particular concern was to provide access to an authentic Catholic education. Cabrini and her sisters realised that giving the poor, migrants and particularly girls and young women access to education required more than establishing the provision. Lucetta Scaraffia argues that Cabrini's model of female emancipation was not one of rights. It was based on 'the assumption of responsibility, on the fact that women won respect and autonomy by showing that they knew how to get things done.'¹¹⁰ This is evident in the practical steps they took to support access to education. The subsidies for *Magistero* students in Rome are a good example as is the help for Charles Grecco to go to the seminary. Visiting families to find absentees is another. The New Orleans practice of keeping girls in the orphanage until they had completed their education was

¹⁰⁸ *Epistolario* 2, August 14, 1895, 543.

¹⁰⁹ *Epistolario* 2, August 1895, 543.

¹¹⁰ Scaraffia, 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini'.

followed in their schools in the United States.¹¹¹ In New York older girls cared for siblings whilst their mothers worked. The sisters organised a nursery for these children so that the girls could attend the community sewing classes.¹¹² Cabrini pointed out in her 1913 report to Rome that providing material for the pupils to make clothes which they then kept proved an incentive for mothers to send the girls to classes.¹¹³

She took the opportunity of her invitation to the first Italian Women's Congress in Rome in 1908 to address this issue in a public arena. The work of Cabrini and her sisters had gained public attention in Italy following their being awarded the Gran Premio, or first prize, for their work with Italian migrants at the Italy Abroad Exhibition at Milan in 1906.¹¹⁴ She was invited to speak to the Congress on women and emigration. She made the point that the problems faced by the poor were doubled for migrants. She highlighted the problem of girls' access to education as one of social justice rooted in the low wages of fathers. This forced women to take work and they withdrew older daughters from school to care for younger siblings. Her letter, which was read aloud and followed by applause, included the following:

regular interruption of schooling to look after younger brothers and sisters, division of domestic chores with the mother, and in addition staying up late at night to help the mother with sewing at home in order to increase the provision for a large family for which the meagre salary of the husband is too small.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ *Epistolario* 5, March 10, 1913, 5.

¹¹² Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 218.

¹¹³ 1913, March 10th, 'All'Eminentissimo Signor Cardinale'.

¹¹⁴ Una delle sue Figlie, *La Madre*, 314.

¹¹⁵ Scaraffia, 'Lettera di Francesca Cabrini'.

In all three case studies there is reference to the importance of women having access to education for both traditional roles and for work outside the home. This was important not only for poorer young migrant women in Rome and New Orleans but also for those from professional and prosperous backgrounds. Sisters provided role models to promote understanding of the new working women. Descriptions of their work in Cabrini's Travel Letters conveyed this message to a wide audience. Cabrini also made a particular contribution by setting her understanding of the important role of women in society within biblical tradition. The letter to the Magistero students goes back to the 'strong woman' of the Old Testament. Cabrini also highlighted the important role played by women in the New Testament. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Christ are good examples. Phil Kilroy and others have pointed to the presentation of these women to condition women with regard to sinfulness and purity.¹¹⁶ Cabrini referred to Magdalene in the context of Mathew's gospel where she was the first to see Christ after the resurrection and was sent by him to tell the apostles the good news. She was, therefore, the first missionary and moreover, the missionary to the apostles.¹¹⁷ Mary, the mother of Christ was described as the 'living Rule'.¹¹⁸ She was central to the establishment of Christianity as a way of life, a lived tradition transmitting the deposit of faith referred to as the 'Tradition'. Thus both were shown in leadership roles in the fledgling

¹¹⁶ Phil Kilroy, 'Coming to an Edge in History: Writing the History of Women Religious and the Critique of Feminism' in *Education, Identity and Women Religious, 1800-1950*, eds. Deidre Raftery and Elizabeth Smythe, 9-10.

¹¹⁷ Cited in Sullivan, *Mother Cabrini*, 36.

¹¹⁸ Cipolla ed., *Tra Un'onda*, 513.

Church. It is therefore not surprising that the sisters in New Orleans and Rome describe themselves as successors to the apostles.

Conclusion

The three elements of practice identified in the case studies are evident in other foundations and in Cabrini's writings. The choice of subject disciplines with regard to local needs meant that overall there was more emphasis on the ornamental subjects of languages and the visual and performing arts than history, geography or science.

Teaching methods included a focus on beauty in terms of examples of good practice. Child-centred practice is evident. Regular study and technical skills were also developed. Religious education across the institute embraced 'institutional', 'intellectual' and 'mystical' elements of religion. Invisible relational pedagogy is evident to support the development of cognitive and ornamental competences as well as the love of religion and practice of virtue. Practical strategies were developed to support access to education particularly for young women and girls.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Introduction

In the 37 years between 1880 and 1917 Cabrini established an extensive global network of schools and other educational provision, spread across nine nations. The picture of the educational practice of Cabrini and her sisters which emerges from the case studies represents only a part of this work. For example, the educational practice in Latin America remains unexplored. Italian migrants there had a different experience from those in the United States, as the language was closer to their own. The depth required for researching educational practice did not allow for more cases. Whilst gaps remain, it is possible to draw conclusions from the three case studies in answer to the original questions. It is hoped that these will engage scholars and MSC sisters and prompt questions for further research. Such scholarly work would be relevant to the history of global networks of schools, of educational practice with migrants and of educational practice informed by a faith or multi-faith tradition.

9.1 How did Mother Cabrini understand Catholic educational practice?

The person to be educated was central to Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice. She aimed to develop the cognitive, creative and moral capacities of each learner. Catholic Christianity was essential to achieving this end. She was orthodox in her faith, but her understanding of Catholic educational practice can be described as progressive. It was progressive in four senses. Two are the child-centred and social-reconstructionist senses identified by Martin and Goodman.¹ Her

¹ Martin and Goodman, 'Reforming lives?'.

understanding of child-centred educational practice had much in common with better known progressive educationalists, such as her contemporary Maria Montessori. The social-reconstructionist sense relates to Cabrini's belief in the need to renew the world through the love of Christ. The child educated to love as Christ did would contribute to social renewal by acting virtuously. A third way in which Cabrini's understanding can be described as progressive was in trying new possibilities. She was centred on the development of the learner, rather than a specific set of subjects or kind of institution. The original Rule had identified possibilities of new kinds of work in the future. She was therefore free to establish innovative provision. The fourth sense is in her understanding of the role of an independent, female, global, Catholic educational Institute. It was these progressive approaches which enabled Cabrini to develop authentically Christian educational practice to meet the needs of her time.

For Cabrini the 'Catholic' of the institution was in the educational practice. It was 'Catholic' practice if it brought the love of Christ to each learner in such a way that the learner subsequently brought that love to others. As such it may be considered a moral practice, in the sense defined by Richard Pring, as the activities 'embody the values and moral aims which they are intended to promote'.² This relied on effective teaching of subject disciplines, with a relational pedagogy. The virtue of loving care, gentle and firm, was essential. This promoted the dignity of the learner, as did the choice of subjects with local progression opportunities. With expansion of the Institute to the United States, Cabrini focused on the dignity of the migrant. The child-centred approach informed the

² Pring, 'Education as a Moral Practice, 102.

development of a curriculum to foster pride in the migrant's heritage. Cabrini considered this essential in preparing for progression in the country of adoption. A morality of happiness, focused on the call to virtue, informed her understanding of moral education. Morality went hand in hand with spirituality and an understanding of the need to develop positive emotions. This required experience of the mystical as well as the institutional and intellectual elements of religion. She developed practical strategies to give every child the opportunity to access this kind of Catholic education.

9.2 How can Mother Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice be seen in the work of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

Cabrini's understanding of Catholic educational practice can be seen in many ways in the case studies and in the data gathered on provision elsewhere. Challenges, difficulties and failures are also evident. The core curriculum is almost the same in the three case studies. The child-centeredness is seen in the variation to meet the needs of pupils of different backgrounds, interests, gender and emotional states. Pride in their child-centred approach may be seen in house annals, testimonies and publicity documents produced by sisters in all three locations.

The creative approach to integration of content, such as religion and science, in other subjects, allowed for coverage of a range of subjects in a limited time. The effectiveness of teaching is demonstrated in the records of inspections. The most striking example recorded in House Annals is, perhaps, the children not wanting to go home for the summer holiday in New Orleans. The joy, delight and encouragement expressed all speak to

the loving care of the pedagogy. The student testimonies, although limited in number, confirm this. The sisters demonstrate a confidence in their practice when dealing with the authorities. The strong educational backgrounds and qualifications of a significant number may explain this. There were also opportunities for ongoing education and formation to support effective teaching. The retreats also contributed.

There were, however, many challenges to providing an appropriate curriculum offer and effective teaching. Generating income was always a problem. Lack of suitable accommodation restricted the curriculum offer. School buildings became over-crowded. The standards were at times lower than those to which sisters aspired. The precarious economic circumstances of families impacted on school attendance. Older pupils were needed at home. Poor health was common. Orphan mobility rates were high. First encounters with some members of the Sicilian migrant community were daunting. Sisters initially found the boys difficult to teach. The climate had an impact on the health of some sisters. The staffing was tight. There were no spare sisters in communities to cover for sick teachers. The transnational context resulted in high staff mobility rates at times. Some superiors were not able to cope.

Whilst there were many difficulties the regular performances by students and pupils in the three locations brought joy to the performers, their teachers and the wider community. The social-reconstructionist nature of the educational practice is evident here. Cabrini wrote of the importance of preparing pupils to be good Christians and good citizens contributing to society after leaving school. The performances brought beauty to the lives

of the poor migrant families. They enabled pupils to bring love to the world whilst still at school. They contributed to making them at home in a new land and provided a focus for the local community. *Magistero* students who learnt to teach in a Christian way with the sisters were prepared to contribute to the social-reconstructionist project as educational professionals.

Many new kinds of educational provision can be seen in the case studies. They were part of a larger practical strategy to give access to Catholic education. The *Magistero* project and the International School in England were new kinds of institutions giving young women access to the new opportunities opening up. The Travel Letters were also innovative. They educated those within and outside of the MSC institutions in geography, history, science and religion in an engaging way. This obtained an audience for the more serious arguments in favour of religion in education, contributing to contemporary discourse on the question. Perhaps the most surprising element of the new educational provision was taking responsibility for parishes. This brought the community to the sisters as well as the sisters to the community through formal and informal education as well as the religious services.

A number of factors which were significant in establishing an independent, female, global, Catholic educational Institute are clarified in the case studies. Having professional qualifications and examination certificates opened doors with both Catholic and secular authorities. The extensive transnational travel of some sisters brought both innovation and continuity in practice. Not having a bishop or male general superior gave

Cabrini direct access to senior members of the hierarchy including the Pope. It also necessitated developing network contacts. The significant role of Jesuit contacts is not surprising. Their role in making modern Catholicism global is recognised.³ The support of powerful networks of Catholic lay women for the MSC suggests a hidden history to be uncovered in relation to global networks of schools. The sisters' start up ability is evident in the studies. So too is their ability to hand over and move on to new start-ups.

9.3 Did Mother Cabrini develop a coherent approach to Catholic educational practice?

There is no document which can be studied to evaluate the coherence of Cabrini's approach to Catholic educational practice. On the surface it may appear incoherent as it was both orthodox and progressive. She did not refer to any particular philosopher's theory. She was a practitioner who reflected on practice. Paddy Walsh has pointed out, however, that to reflect on practice requires a philosophical framework. He uses the term 'philosophical' in a broad sense:

This is 'philosophy' in a broad and generous sense. Unlike current academic philosophy in the Anglo-Saxon world it is not ruthlessly distinguished from theology, history and human science.⁴

Cabrini's theoretical framework was religious. She may, therefore, be considered to have had a 'theology' rather than a 'philosophy' of education. The central principle which guided Cabrini's reflection on education was an ancient belief: God loves each person. Christ, God

³ See: McGreevy, *American Jesuits and the World*.

⁴ Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning* (London: Cassell, 1993), 49.

incarnate, demonstrated that love and his heart symbolised it. This provided the reference point as Cabrini established educational practice. Cabrini also wanted the pupil to experience a personal relationship with God. She wrote of the reality of this love and did not regard it as an abstract principle. The experience informed her motto 'I can do all things in Him who strengthens me'. When she wrote of 'forming the heart to the love of religion' she meant to form each learner's heart to love as Christ did, through the practice of virtue. Aquinas' description of religion as a virtue clarifies her usage here.⁵ He explains that the virtue of religion regulates a person's reverent relation with God in the way that the virtue of justice regulates relationships with other human beings. Teaching the subjects of the curriculum to develop cognitive and ornamental competences provided an opportunity to educate the heart to love and be virtuous. The virtue of 'loving care' practised by the teacher enabled the learner to experience love and see it modelled in a concrete way. The cognitive and ornamental competences which she aimed to develop were not new. Neither was the practice of virtue. It is possible to draw parallels with the transcendental properties of truth, beauty and goodness.⁶ She was concerned with emotional as well as intellectual development. The term 'forming the heart to the love of religion' reflects this. The 'heart' is understood in a traditionally religious way of bringing together the intellect, the emotions and the will. This was necessary to develop the desire to love as Christ did. It also informed her understanding of

⁵ Aquinas, 'Is Religion a Virtue', Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologiæ of St. Thomas Aquinas*, (Second Revised Edition, 1920, literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province), II.I. 81, 2. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/> (accessed 20/08/2018.)

⁶ For a discussion of these properties see: Vivian Boland, 'Thomas Aquinas and the Transcendental Properties of Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Integrity' in *Education in a Catholic Perspective*, eds. McKinney and Sullivan, 49-64.

education for social-reconstruction. Cabrini did not view Italians and migrants in need of civilizing. She rather saw their need to experience the love of God. This was a progressive alternative to modernity's secular provision. It is a rare female contribution to the philosophy of education of the nineteenth century and to Catholic intellectual heritage: a hidden history.

Cabrini's central guiding principle of God's love for each person was ancient. The context in which she wished to teach this love, however, was new. Urbanisation and migration had taken people from their homes and communities. Many experienced poverty, deprivation and prejudice. Educational provision was lacking. Much of the provision available focused on the intellect to the neglect of the emotions. Harsh discipline was not uncommon. New means of transmitting education were emerging, with the requirement for universal schooling in Italy and other western nations. Cabrini embraced these new contexts. She saw them as opportunities for 'the Greater Glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus'. Her own education and professional qualifications, coupled with her practice of virtue, enabled her to negotiate her way through them. She then applied the principle of God's love in establishing a range of new educational provision.

She and her sisters did not leave this embodied in a written theory but in a lived tradition. This was her contribution to Catholic educational practice. As such, the principle was not always consistently applied due to human weakness, restricted resources and authorities who had different priorities. The tradition had coherence nevertheless. The principle of

God's love united the progressive means of Cabrini's time and the orthodox end of Catholic Tradition. For Cabrini this was authentic Catholic educational practice for a new era. To use Sir Fred Clarke's term, it was a 'new application of ancient principles'.⁷

⁷ Clarke, *Education and Social Change*, 2.

Postscript

The MSC continued to grow after Cabrini's death. They achieved her dream of establishing a mission in China in 1926, when sisters, led by Mother Domenica Bianchi, opened schools and dispensaries there. Another dream came to fruition in 1957, when an MSC institute of higher education, Cabrini College, opened. It was recognised as a university in 2016. By the 1970s the sisters had moved into two new continents, Australia and Africa. Today the MSC are working in fifteen countries in the world: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, England, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Italy, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Russia, Spain, Swaziland, Switzerland and the United States.

The sisters continue to work in Rome, New Orleans and London. The schools in Rome and New Orleans are now fee-paying. The fee-paying school in London became voluntary-aided in 1953. It continues to serve migrants with 60% of pupils having English as a second language. Migrant sisters continue to work there, two from Ethiopia and one from Argentina. Following the Second Vatican Council the sisters embraced the preferential option for the poor with renewed energy. From the 1980s formation of the laity working in schools, hospitals and other missions became a priority. These lay women and men continue the MSC work as vocations decrease in the west and sisters are deployed working where there is greatest need, particularly in Africa and Latin America. In the most recent MSC General Chapter sisters and laity concluded that today, as always, they are 'impelled by the Spirit to spread the love of Christ'.⁸

⁸ MSC, 2014 General Chapter Conclusions, 10.

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Appendix: Case Study Protocol

1. Draft briefing to be circulated to those assisting e.g. archivists, MSC sisters and head teachers of schools.
2. Use data collected so far to inform questions. Review and update questions after each of the following steps, seek advice from supervisor where necessary.
3. Study sources for contextual information regarding the local and national situation. Consider the history of education within broader social history including: urbanisation, communication, women, the Catholic church, major events e.g. war.
4. Identify key primary sources.
5. Study primary sources available prior to visit.
6. Finalise questions for site visit.
7. Visit to site, photographs and notes.
8. Record data, initial analysis and identify new questions.
9. Visit archive in Rome/Pennsylvania/London to study additional primary sources.
10. Review data collected in steps 2-7. Follow up visit if possible.
11. Draft findings.
12. Review process with supervisor after each case and adjust protocol as necessary.